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ESSAYS
OF A
BIRMINGHAM MANUFACTURER.

BY
WILLIAM LUCAS SARGANT,

Author of "Social Innovators,"
"Apology for Sinking Funds,"
&c., &c.

VOLUME I.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF MANUFACTURERS.

I.

THE title I have chosen, invites the obvious but trite form of sarcasm; that truly, though I may be a wit among manufacturers I am only a manufacturer among wits. If I should have any readers, I can assure them that I have not selected this title, as an invitation to scorners. If I should have no readers, I will console myself with a favourite reflection of the *Saturday Review*; that though my labour is useless to the world, it is of excellent use to myself, by diverting my mind from the excessive study of ledgers and prices current, of wages and tariffs and trades' unions.

Why then, have I declared my ordinary vocation? I answer that in reading anonymous and even avowed publications, I often wish that I knew something about the author. Since, as Sir G. C. Lewis has shown, the greater part of our knowledge and even the greater part of our opinions, must be taken on trust from others, a reader ought to inquire who it is that is professing to instruct him. In the *Quarterly*, or in the *Economist*, the editor stands sponsor to the essayist: as I am unfortunate enough to have no sponsor, I show the colours of my craft.

The fact which I thus advertise, is of more importance than the announcement of an obscure name. Our opinions are flavoured by our pursuits. A butt of sherry poured into an emptied Madeira cask, contracts a richer bouquet: a political question after passing through the mind of a greyhaired official, comes back again as dry as *amontillado*, robbed of all sweet savour of enthusiasm.

When we are startled by Pascal's assertion, that the human mind is incapable, without divine intervention, of arriving at any moral truth, it is consolatory to learn that that eminent man began as a mathematician and ended as an ascetic: that his understanding was distorted by his wilful addiction to demonstration, and that his temper was disturbed by early and long continued suffering.

I am neither a dry official, nor like Pascal a morbid mathematician: I do not even desire the hardness of the one, but I would give worlds for a spark of the other's genius. The evil tendencies caused by my pursuits, are evident without self-accusation: I only claim for myself a sobriety of mind resulting from long acquaintance with men and every-day affairs.

Literary men will doubtless be of opinion, that the mental flavour imparted by manufacturing pursuits, is of no importance to the world. Literature and mercantilism indeed, are by no means rivals, for they do not pursue the same mistress: nor are they absolutely enemies, for they seldom appear in direct collision. When they do come together however, they exhibit an entire incompatibility of temper: the trader says of the writer—he thinks himself

so—clever: the writer retorts with a more ample vocabulary of enmity; with Philistine, *Épicier*, and Ungeist.

Notwithstanding this depreciation, manufacturers constitute a highly important element in British society: it is the extension of their pursuits which has multiplied the opulence of England during the last hundred years; which has doubled our population in half a century; which supplied the resources for the great wars of our fathers; which has enabled us to bear, not without grumbling, but without flinching, the unheard-of debt bequeathed to us. Without our manufactures, we should have fainted long before Austerlitz: Spain must have been left to free herself if she could; and all our glories earned in a righteous cause, the Peninsular campaigns and the crowning battle of Waterloo, had been impossible.

There are persons, no doubt, who regard our progress with horror: who, forgetting for a moment their doubled rentrolls, would rejoice to see Manchester and Birmingham brought back again to their condition of a century ago, with numbers a tenth of what they are at present.

But here the towns are: not indeed possessing any monopoly of ignorance and vice, but disfigured with deep scars from long continued neglect. We cannot revert to rural felicity, to green fields, to rough and manly and ignorant squires, to independent yeomanry, to ill supported and superstitious and serf-like hinds.

In these towns, the manufacturers are the true leaders: for it is their enterprise and experience and capital which employ and maintain the artisans; the

artisans whose skilful labour produces those commodities the distribution of which enriches merchants and retailers.

II.

WHAT are the characteristics of these leaders?

There are manufacturers of all sorts: from the cultivated gentleman, who has enjoyed an university education, and has inherited his plant from his father, to the needy workman, who with more ambition than capital, employs half a dozen persons, sells the goods they jointly make, and perhaps rises into opulence, perhaps is ruined by the failure of his customers. Between these extremes there are manufacturers of every degree of fortune and cultivation.

The dwellers on the land are in this respect differently circumstanced. Go into a country parish containing a thousand or two thousand souls: you will find perhaps one squire, one clergyman, a dozen or two of farmers, two or three hundred labourers. Here are three distinct classes: the squire and the clergyman constituting the gentry; a second class being formed of the farmers; and a third class of the labourers. Among manufacturers there are but two classes; the artisans and their employers: it is as though in a rural parish we threw together the squire and the clergyman and the farmers, and regarded them all as one class. If we sought the characteristics of that class, we should have to disregard the jollity and conservatism of the game preserving squire, the decorum and kindness of the high and dry vicar: we should have to dwell upon the hospitality of the farmers; ready with their ale

and wine, but chary of their money, just to their labourers but suspicious of education, reverencing the landowners but grumbling at their four-footed game.

I must resign myself to do the same with manufacturers: I must look upon all as one class; and disregarding the acquirements and refinement of the few, I must seek the characteristics of the rougher many.

The many are, certainly, distinguished by a good deal of roughness. In Liverpool it is common to speak of Liverpool gentlemen and Manchester men. Burns perhaps might have thought that a true man was higher in creation than a gentleman: he might have said that gentility was but the guinea's stamp, and that a base coin might have a finished outside. A Manchester manufacturer being on the Liverpool Exchange, admired the brokers' jaunty air, their smart ties, and their well trimmed beards: he was equally impressed with their superficial talk and their indifference to anything not to be found in the *Times*. Coming away, and reverting to the Fox and the Mask; pity, said he, that so fair a face hath no brains.

Now manufacturers have brains, for they cannot live without them. In common with merchants, they must perform the ordinary operations of buying and selling; but average common sense is enough for these. Unlike merchants, they have all the processes of manufacture on their hands. Besides possessing mechanical skill, to be successful, they must produce at the same cost, a rather better and more uniform article than their neighbours, by which means they

will get a better price; and they must be more punctual than their neighbours, by which means they will command a preference in every market. The first requires a superior system of inspection; the second a superior organization, and a judicious choice of managers. No fool can initiate or even keep up the necessary arrangements: no fool can judiciously fill up the inevitable gaps in his staff.

Competition too, is always at work: competition, not only between one Englishman and another, but between Englishmen and foreigners. In the country, farms are not let to the highest bidders, and all must sell their produce at about the same prices: much attention to detail, some liberality in cultivation, the occasional adoption of a new implement, are all that can safely be thought of. In manufactures, there is direct and untiring competition, between man and man, between nation and nation. Without lively and sound brains, a manufacturer is beaten out of the field.

It is imagined by the thoughtless that British success has resulted inevitably from circumstances. Here was a great James Watt who invented a condensing and manageable steam engine: here were iron and coal praying us to get them: here was a commercial people ready to import and export materials and goods; a mere land of Cockaigne, say the dilettanti.

If this be so, the more is the credit due to other nations. See what brain has done in Alsace, see what it has done in Switzerland. Manchester brings its cotton wool from Liverpool, about 30 miles: Alsace has to go to Havre, nearly 500 miles. Manchester

finds its markets in crowded Lancashire and Yorkshire and in the populous midland counties; even London is little more than 200 miles distant: Alsace sends the greater part of its fabrics to Paris, more than 300 miles away. It is the ability of the manufacturers, aided by long experience, which overcomes these disadvantages; and which has overcome them so thoroughly that the wealth and industrial organization and beneficence of Mulhouse, are the admiration of social reformers.

Switzerland, like Alsace, fetches its cotton wool from a port 500 miles off. For the sale of its productions it is under still greater difficulties than Alsace; for a large part of its mills work for exportation, and its calicoes travel thousands of leagues to compete with those of Great Britain. No doubt, Swiss taxation is very low, varying in the different cantons from a fifth to a tenth of ours per head of population: the rate of wages is also low: trade is free as the air. But without great mental capacity, and admirable administration, these advantages would by no means counterbalance the difficulties of distance from the seacoast. The manufacturers know that a high rate of profit is impossible: they have proved to their artisans that a high rate of wages is impossible: employers and employed are on genial terms; not as in France with workmen grumbling at being *exploités* by capital, and with masters perpetually complaining of their workmen; nor as in England with masters and men on fair and decent terms but scarcely acquainted with each other. Unless the Swiss manufacturers had brains and hearts, there would soon be an end of their trade.

But it is with English manufacturers that we are concerned : they have not these difficulties ; their harbours for importation are near at hand ; their markets are around them ; their shipping for foreign trade is at their doors. True ; the heroic age of English manufacturers is past : but it is not so long past ; for it is less than a hundred years since Watt took out his first patent ; and all the inventions of Arkwright, Crompton, Cartwright, Boulton, Baskerville, and scores of others, crowd a moderate period. The abilities developed by carrying their inventions into practice, have been transmitted to the present generation.

There has been no need lately of great mechanical inventions, nor of new organizations of factories. One remarkable period however, has tested the abilities of Lancashire men : the dearth of cotton caused by the American Civil War, was a trial such as seldom occurs to any English population.

It must be confessed that during the period which preceded the misfortune, there was an absence of foresight, in refusing to support with liberality the schemes of Mr. Bazley and his friends for opening new sources of supply. It was a singular and blameable apathy, which permitted the vast cotton manufacture to be based on a material drawn mostly from one country. The doctrine of *laissez faire*, *laissez passer*, which, since Quesnay promulgated it, has half regenerated Europe ; the term free-trade, which has come to be the popular English expression for the same thing : these, like all forms of thought generally adopted, have been exaggerated till much mischief has followed. The law of supply and

demand, it was thought, would bring cotton when it was wanted. In the long run, yes! but unfortunately, that long run may sometimes be a very long one, and those who have to wait for the end of it may be ruined or famished. Our forces might have gone to Abyssinia without supplies, and might have trusted to their demand to bring all they wanted: if they could have waited, the supplies would have come, but in the meantime they would have died. There was no doubt that we should have cotton wool enough at last; for if America permanently ceased to grow it, there would be plenty to be had from the East: the hazard was that during the transition period Lancashire would be ruined. The doctrines of *laissez faire* and of free-trade, like all other doctrines based on observation and not on abstract axioms and postulates, have their limits: and those who apply them universally, instead of taking them as general guides, will occasionally fall into gross errors.

In this instance then, the manufacturers' foresight was in default. But when the mischief arrived, neither brain nor heart was wanting. It is not true indeed, as has been asserted, that throughout Lancashire and Cheshire, of the tens of thousands rendered destitute not one died of want: still further from the truth is it that the opportunity seized of giving school instruction to the neglected and ignorant, counterbalanced to them the evils of bodily want; as though any school instruction were to be compared in value, with the industrial education which results in honest earning of daily bread; as though a faculty and love of reading were to be put in the balance against an independent spirit, which

scorns to receive the bread of idleness. The Cotton Dearth was undoubtedly a frightful misfortune, which must have left behind it a heavy legacy of pauperism and corruption. Yet whatever could be done, was done: it was done promptly and thoroughly. There was no silly refusal to receive aid from countrymen or foreigners: but there was no appeal to Parliament for Government aid, such as humiliated the rich landed proprietors, under the comparatively trifling misfortune of the Rinderpest. Our northern fellow subjects showed that in abilities and resolution they had not degenerated.

I have already instituted a comparison between Liverpool and Manchester: between the two great Lancashire towns; the one mercantile, the other manufacturing. It might well be conjectured that Liverpool would be far more intelligent and generally instructed: that while the manufacturers were confining themselves to the narrow processes of managing their factories, the merchants would be regulating their adventures by studying the shifting politics, the wars and revolutions, of countries far and near; of France and Japan, of Austria and Brazil, of Spain and China. No doubt, you meet in Liverpool many travelled men; and no knowledge is so available for conversation as that derived from travelling. Two strangers who have explored Central America, will spend an evening in comparing their experience of Guatemala and Costa Rica and Nicaragua; and in discussing the effects of Walker's filibustering.

But in more important matters I do not find in Liverpool any proofs of superior intelligence. I know no newspaper there which combines such a

large circulation with sober and thoughtful writing, as the three manufacturing journals, the Manchester Guardian, the Leeds Mercury, and the Birmingham Daily Post. Liverpool has no association like the Manchester Statistical Society, which was formed even before the London one, and at whose large annual meetings you now see such leading citizens as the Mayors of Manchester and of Salford. I am told by one thoroughly able to judge, that Liverpool is of all large towns the most indifferent to any proposal for the formation of such a society.

The fact is easily explained: the minds of Liverpool men are engrossed by their business: their profits are not made by steady industry but by happy speculation: their fortunes do not grow uniformly, but are made or lost by jumps. You ask about the means of some one on 'change:—his father left him thirty thousand pounds, but he has diminished it: by the bye, this last rise in sugar must have put him straight again. Men are perpetually going up and down; and are likely enough to experience the vicissitudes of a speculator elsewhere, who assured me that three times had he lived in a garret, and three times had his wife driven her carriage. At a Liverpool dinner party, the ladies having retired, some general conversation begins: a whisper however, is heard; how was cotton when you left?—Hardening. A dead silence, and for an hour nothing but cotton.

A cottonspinner too, feels a great interest in the price of his staple; but the difference of a farthing a pound is to him a trifle when compared with what it is to the speculator, who may be dealing with bales where the manufacturer deals with stones. The

manufacturer, taught by experience that in common times, with foresight, he can escape loss from fluctuations of price; and knowing that he can make a profit by his well ordered factory; finds his mind at ease for the discussion of ordinary topics, or even for reading of a grave character: but what can you expect from the speculator, whose fortune, or perhaps whose solvency, is staked on a rise or fall of cotton? Can you imagine him passing an evening in earnestly debating the statistics of crime, or the theoretical functions of capital?

What is true of the textile districts, is still more true of the hardware towns. Their occupations are such that they scarcely can furnish topics of conversation: they do not in fact occupy men's minds in leisure moments. There are a multitude of details which employ the business hours, but which are not thought of again: there may be a deficiency of orders, a temporary want of profit, an occasional large bad debt; none of them things to be talked of, or even to be much thought of. They are not great enough to fill men's minds; which therefore, have room left for other topics.

The hardware towns too, have an advantage in the character of their workmen, caused by the great variety of their trades, and the consequent absence of widely-spread machines. I am not so ignorant as to decry machinery: I am fully aware of the benefits conferred on the world by the prodigious increase in the productiveness of modern labour: I know too, how greatly England is indebted to Watt and Arkwright for the growth and augmented opulence of the last eighty years. But I see clearly

that there are some attendant evils. In adopting spinning machinery and power looms, you create a necessity for employing multitudes of tenders and watchers; that is multitudes of unskilled labourers; of labourers who grow up without having their faculties developed in their daily occupations. When you raise machinery nearly to the level of men, you pull men down nearly to the level of machinery. The cotton districts possess, no doubt, a considerable number of highly intelligent mechanics; such, for example, as the engineers: but below that class there are crowds of unskilled, thoughtless, ill paid, wretched, men and women and children, unhealthy and drunken and criminal. All towns have many such: those districts have the most, where machinery is most complete and most largely used. An English professor of my acquaintance, spent much time in learning the details of manufactures: he inspected the great factories, he studied the engineering, he lived for weeks among the hardware workmen. He was surprised and delighted with the innumerable mechanical contrivances found in the Birmingham workshops: he met with as much ingenuity in the making of hooks and eyes, or brass chain, as would command the admiration of the world if it had been applied to the wide spread manufacture of cottons or woollens. In the north, the judicious use of a bit of chalk, laid the foundation of the great fortune of the Strutts: such an application in a hardware trade, could scarcely have been worth a hundred pounds. In the hardware towns therefore, the proportion of skilled and unskilled labourers is thus reversed: the skilled labourers, the ingenious and trained mechanics,

outnumber the mere drudges. As the class of employers is largely recruited from the cleverest of such workmen, there will be found great ingenuity and mechanical skill among the master class.

III.

HITHERTO, I have compared the manufacturing towns with speculative Liverpool: I am willing to compare them with commercial London. I need hardly say that the comparison must be between persons of the same class. There are in the metropolis large numbers of distinguished men who are found nowhere else in England. It can scarcely be said indeed, that the Peers or the members of the House of Commons generally live in London: they for the most part are visitors during the season. Putting these aside however, there are numerous residents of eminence: the judges, the most distinguished barristers and physicians, the professors of natural science, the periodical writers, the actuaries, the managers of great companies. Curiously enough, we talk of the high centralization of France and Germany; and we forget that in everything but government they are far less centralized than England. Germany has hitherto been split up into scores of princedoms; and a little Court like that of Weimar could attract and permanently hold so vast a genius as Goethe. France has but one imperial court; but its numerous centres such as Rouen, Lyons, Toulouse, have their courts of justice, their local bar, their literary and scientific academies. London therefore, is eminently the metropolis of the

kingdom, and nearly engrosses its literary and legal distinctions.

I make no comparison between the manufacturing towns and London in this respect. I only propose to set side by side the manufacturing men of business and the London men of business. Nor do I attempt to do this by means of my own observation; for I know that the field is too wide to allow anyone to inspect more than a corner of it.

I will make my appeal to facts patent to all: I will found my estimate of men on their public and well known actions. First, in politics, what has trading London done? The two fundamental changes of this generation, are the reform bill of 1832, and the repeal of the corn laws: the former of these essentially altered the balance of power in the constitution; the latter resuscitated the stagnating commerce of the country, and enabled us to take full advantage of the contemporary invention of railroads and the discoveries of gold.

In passing the reform bill it was not London but Birmingham that took the lead: it was the Political Union formed by Mr. Attwood, whose statue adorns or disfigures New Street, by which the strength of the mechanics and their neighbours the miners was concentrated, and the example of rapid and energetic combination was set to the whole country.

Again; trading London, I presume, will not advance any claim to having commenced, or even very much aided, the repeal of the corn laws. Here it was Manchester and the textile districts which did the work: which organized the Union called the League: which laboured and struggled for years;

which spent its money freely ; which stirred up even sleepy London, and at last succeeded.

More recently, in a social movement not without importance, London tried to take a lead, but could not overcome its apathy and love of ease. Twenty years ago, and for several years afterwards, an admirable band of men who called themselves the Christian Socialists, tried to introduce from Paris the best parts of socialism, modified by the religious spirit which above all other characteristics distinguishes us from the Parisians. Headed by such generous men as Messrs. Hughes, Ludlow, and Vansittart Neale, backed by the grave authority of Mr. Maurice, aided by the lively genius of Mr. Kingsley in Cheap Clothes and Nasty, and Alton Locke, sparing neither labour nor money, they called into a feeble, flickering, precarious existence, a few small workshops and stores, and ended with establishing a great adult school, called the Working Men's College. In the unimportant manufacturing town of Rochdale, unknown to the south, except for having produced the greatest popular orator of the day, perhaps the greatest orator of the century, a few workmen clubbing together literally their pence, without any dependence but that on their own untutored brains and resolute hearts, carried out the same experiment with such success as to make it celebrated throughout the civilized world. They began as workmen, they have risen to be extensive manufacturers ; and they have a right to claim a commanding superiority over those who in London made the same attempt and failed.

We often forget the change that has taken place

in the relation of London to other towns. Macaulay says that at the Revolution London was seventeen times as populous as Bristol, which stood next in numbers: at present, London is only five times as populous as Liverpool or Manchester. In the first sixty years of this century, London increased nearly threefold, Liverpool nearly sixfold. Railroads too, have done much. Emerson divides the English into two categories; Londoners and non-Londoners: but he regards as Londoners those who habitually visit the metropolis; that is all the affluent classes. Before we had railway communication, the number of such visitors was relatively small; and Dr. Arnold at Rugby, complained of having to teach boys who had never seen either the sea or London. Dr. Temple, I imagine, has no such difficulty to fight with.

Lacon tells us that Dr. Johnson, sitting in a smoky corner of Bolt Court, found within a radius of half a mile, more energy and ability and intellect, than was possessed by the rest of the island. The Chamberlain of the City, in his Statistical Vindication, has extended the radius of half a mile to a "circumference of ten miles." He says that London is the focus of literature and journalism; a statement which no one can dispute. He adds that for activity, intelligence, and every business quality, the Londoner is in advance of his provincial brethren. I propose to test this last assertion by well known facts.

First, let us look at municipal government. I will say nothing derogatory of the Lord Mayor and the Corporation. I am far from joining in the sneers which attend the spectacle maker or wax chandler,

who is elevated to the chair: myself a trader, I rejoice in it; and I feel that if a railsplitter and a tailor could successively conduct the affairs of a very great nation, a retail dealer might make an excellent Lord Mayor. With so little understanding is the world governed! It is one of the glories of free England, that for centuries past, any industrious man might hope to be Lord Mayor: an officer, as old Fuller remarks, in one respect second to none; and one who, in the Stuart times, just as at present, had commonly risen from the lowest ranks.

But around the City are the great Parliamentary Boroughs, which have no municipal organization. Marylebone, Lambeth, the Tower Hamlets, are represented in the House of Commons, but have no mayor or magistrates, no town council or aldermen, no legal means of meeting together to manage their own affairs. Self-government, the boast of the Englishman, the thing which the French can neither express in their language nor practise in their daily life, is unknown to the metropolis at large. Thirty years ago, the great manufacturing towns were in the same unorganized condition; but as soon as the municipal bill passed, they obtained charters of incorporation, and have since spent time and money freely in correcting the evils which continued neglect had caused. London alone has done nothing: not one of its great Parliamentary boroughs has obtained municipal powers.

One of the most discreditable negligences is the bad condition of the Thames. The modern practice of pouring all abominations into the river, is common to most towns: but it might have been

expected from the superior intelligence and activity claimed for commercial London, that the evils would have been recognized and corrected years ago, and that an example would have been set for the less enlightened provinces. It might have been anticipated too, that legal means would have been found to protect and purify the river in its higher course: but the world learns with astonishment that in some of the reaches, weeds and silt are threatening to choke up the passage and to make water carriage impossible; and that the locks and weirs are in a state of dangerous dilapidation.

What is far worse, and more notorious, the drinking water derived from those upper portions, is polluted by the drainage of thirty-two towns. The London water too, is not turned on at all times, as it is in some great towns, but has to be collected in private cisterns; and on Sundays is not turned on at all. While Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, have provided themselves with a plentiful supply of good water, London has gone on lazily drawing from a river which by the general increase of population has become fouler every year.

In the supply of gas again, a good example has been set elsewhere, and has not even been followed by the metropolis. A late Committee of the House of Commons reported that both in price and in illuminating power, other towns were far ahead; and that the London Companies ought to be compelled to serve the public better. Plymouth gets its gas at 2s. 9d. for a thousand feet; London pays 4s. 6d.: Birmingham for 3s. (now once more reduced to 2s. 6d.) gets a fair illuminating power;

London at a price more by one half, gets an illuminating power of only 12 candles.

The cabs, as everyone knows, are nearly the worst in the kingdom: small, dirty, ill horsed, with uncivil drivers; and with the fares so arranged that in a time of pressure, a single person can hardly secure a cab at all.

Look also at the administration of the Poor Law: read once more, if you can do it without sickening, the disgusting details of the infirmaries: pauper nurses, dirt and neglect, insufficient medical attendance, guardians dining on the rates and deserving poor left to rot. Put these abominations side by side with the comparatively intelligent and humane management by some of the manufacturing towns; and say on which side is the balance of thoughtfulness and activity.

Economy, it is said, is needful, because the rates amount to £1 a head: are they heavier than elsewhere? In Paris, the entire local taxation is £4 a head: in our manufacturing towns it may be as in London, about £1 a head: but London is on the average far richer, and has a vastly greater assessable property: and if anyone doubts this, let him remember that nearly half the house tax of England is paid in London.

There exist the means of abundant education for all classes: there are charities by the score, utterly useless or corrupting: in other places these would have been diverted to the maintenance of schools. But there are also, great, old fashioned schools, and wretchedly are their means wasted. We learn some particulars from the Royal Commission of 1861 on

Public Schools. The Charter House we find, had 44 boys on the foundation, and intended to raise this number to 60: there were boarders and day scholars who paid for their education, and who in 1825 had made up the whole numbers to 480; but in 1835 these had dwindled to 99, and even in 1861 had only risen to 136. St. Paul's, with £9500 a year, educated 153 boys; that number having remained unchanged since the Reformation, when Dean Colet fixed it in honour of the miraculous draught of fishes. What shall we say of traders, so fast asleep that they are incapable of bursting such a cobweb bond as this; and go on with the mystic number unchanged while the children to be instructed have increased tenfold? Compare these doings with those of Manchester, which with £2000 a year educates more boys than St. Paul's, and attains the highest honours; compare them with those at the Birmingham school, which with an income one fourth larger than that of St. Paul's, educates not 153 children, but 1800, of whom 600 belong to the middle and upper classes. Where is that superior intelligence and activity of commercial London?

The alleged intelligence ought to be accompanied by public spirit; by a readiness to come forward in support of patriotic measures: but everyone who has tried, will tell you that London is the most difficult of all places to stir up. I have said that its riches are shown by the fact that it pays nearly half the house tax of England: we might anticipate that such abundant means, combined with such superior intelligence, would cause commercial London, to be the first not merely to establish useful societies, but

also to promote them over the country: we might expect to find a City Propaganda for civilizing Manchester and Birmingham. Take for example, Free Libraries, institutions exempt from the objections urged against most charities, and found in practice a cheap and highly valuable means of education: doubtless, London City seized on the Act for their establishment, and rushed northward to urge its application. If the City did this, it acted with singular inconsistency; for as I see it stated, up to 1866 not one Free Library was established in London.

A stranger would imagine, that the great wealth of London would enable it to support every desirable charitable institution, and to come to the assistance of the less rich towns: he would expect to find that the country generally would appeal to the metropolis for help. I can say from experience that this is the last thing which is usually thought of. In any national calamity such as the Lancashire Cotton Dearth, London gives assistance, just as every other considerable town does: but in ordinary local cases, no one turns to the City for help. Indeed it is a singular and discreditable fact that London is constantly appealing to the provinces. Out of scores of London circulars which I have received, I have before me one from an Orphan Asylum; four from homes for neglected boys, as though there were no neglected boys in manufacturing towns; one from the "Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association." As I have happily escaped the reputation of a Philanthropist, I infer that these circulars are distributed generally, and

that they are favourably received : that in fact, rich London does sponge on the less rich provinces.

Had I been a Londoner, I should have blushed at the eulogy of the Spectator, on the occasion of a subscription for the sufferers in London by the cholera. The writer showed what is commonly expected, by his gratified astonishment at seeing subscriptions pouring in at the rate of a thousand pounds a day : now a manufacturing town having one tenth of the population of London and having one twentieth of its means, would be amazed at finding itself praised for pouring in subscriptions at fifty pounds a day : if they came in ten times as fast, then that town might rejoice.

This same absence of public spirit is found in all classes. The Journeyman Engineer tells us that the London mechanics are the picked men of the whole country : having employed a good many of them at different times, I am able to say that my own experience does not confirm this opinion : I am quite ready however, to concede that it may be nevertheless true. As these picked men must be, one with another, the best educated of their class, it follows that there must be more artisan intelligence in London than elsewhere. But London is to only a small extent a manufacturing town : most of the goods marked London are made in other places ; the cutlery in Sheffield, the sadlery in Walsall, the guns and hardware in Birmingham. The intelligence of the mechanics then, only slightly leavens the mass of the working men. If this were not so, the apathy which prevails would be astonishing. There are few more experienced judges

of the matter than Mr. Ludlow, who for twenty years has watched and laboured in the popular cause. Now without any undue disposition to censure; writing, not as a satirist but as a true man; he confesses that the great movements by the working men in their own behalf have had their origin in the provinces. The metropolis has been found in the rear, following the provincial leaders who have borne the burden and danger of the first attack.

The commercial inhabitants of the metropolis really believe that when a man calls himself a Londoner, there is no more to be said: he belongs to the greatest and richest city in the world, and that is glory enough for any man. I may be excused for pointing out that a coral reef is a great and wonderful production, but that the insects which have made it are minute and unimportant. The English are a great people, but an Englishman who is idle, careless, and cowardly, is by the contrast made more contemptible. London is a great city: but the commercial Londoners who are content without municipal institutions; who neglect their fine river; who drink foul water and burn weak, sulphureous, gas; who are resigned to dirty cabs and uncivil drivers; who neglect their poor and feast their guardians; who maintain filthy and inefficient infirmaries; who waste the funds of their multitudinous charities, and permit their great endowed schools to misapply their means while the education of the middle classes is shamefully neglected; who even in subscriptions of money are behind the less wealthy provinces; and who are

regularly in the rear of all movements in favour of the working classes: these men cannot shield themselves behind the greatness of their city, as a cover for their individual idleness and selfishness.

The self-sufficiency of commercial London provokes an offensive epithet. Mr. Mill somewhere quotes from Bacon, "*Opinio copiae, inopiae maxima causa est.*" Dream of wealth, and wake a pauper: flatter your mind and starve it: cockneyism is the parent of imbecility.

Of my numerous London friends, scarcely any are tainted with cockneyism: I wish I could say as much for my acquaintance. However, when I am annoyed with the buzzing of one of these, I reflect that self-asserting vanity raises at once a strong presumption against the man who exhibits it: I remind myself that the Red Indian Chief is superb in this way, and decked out in warpaint and feathers, boasts himself the greatest of mortals: I recollect that the Emperor of China is the King of Kings, and Brother of the Sun; a potentate far greater than Napoleon or Victoria, either of whom could by a word drive him back to his hereditary Tartary. Conceit, in short, is the child of ignorance.

A magnificent strut might be deemed natural in Louis XIV, during half his life the arbiter of Europe: the proud Duke of Somerset might be pardoned: but the *novus homo* should think meanly of himself, or seem to do so.

If London citizens possessed the superiority they claim, their tone in daily life would be astonishing. A man's ability exhibits itself very much in the direct influence he exerts over other men. Now

if a London citizen finds himself in what he calls the country, that is in any part of the kingdom outside the Bills of Mortality, his alleged superiority ought to make him the natural leader of his new acquaintance. But to lead men, you must please them; you must begin with being modest and un-presuming; not flaunting your excellence in their faces, but leaving them to find it out.

Men should be taught as though you taught them not,
And things unknown advanced as things forgot.

A prig is so unpopular that he can hardly get a fair hearing. He might mutter to himself with the warpainted Indian, if either of them had ever heard of Pope :

Envy will merit like its shade pursue;
But like the shadow, proves the substance true.

However, there is neither merit nor envy in the case: there is the complacency of ignorance and warpaint, followed by dislike and avoidance. The alleged superiority is sadly in fault.

In so numerous a class, there will of course be many exceptions. One, a man of literature, is adopted into a wealthy trading house, and proves himself equal to the business of life: a second, a leading merchant, an early promoter of free trade, a profound student of the laws of price and of banking, acquires vast influence in the City, not by wealth but by genius and virtue: a third, the capable fellow workman of the second, distinguished also by his statistical investigations, is selected by a great banking house to become the managing partner:

others may be found capable of cleverly criticising the Queen's English, or of pursuing an abstract and neglected branch of literature. But if one swallow does not make a summer, a score of literary traders do not constitute an academy.

IV.

IF then we compare the manufacturers with the smart brokers and gamblers of Liverpool, or with the smug and self-sufficient traders of the City, we may fairly say that judged by their actions during the last generation, the manufacturing towns have a triumphant preëminence.

It is true that in education they have no superiority: nay, though many of them are highly educated, they are on the average inferior, because many of them have begun life as workmen, and more as sons of workmen. The best of them are equal to the best country gentlemen: the worst are equal to the ordinary farmers.

There is no indifference to education, however: there is even a general and strong desire for it. I know that this is denied. But the denial proceeds from schoolmasters, who unconsciously exaggerate the importance of their own pursuits: who assume that everything ought to be sacrificed to a boy's schooling.

A master of a grammar school complained to me on this matter: the fathers, he said, frequently urged on him particular attention to their sons: but it was not Latin or French or history about which they were anxious: their boys were going im-

mediately into a counting-house, and it was particularly requested that their writing and arithmetic should be looked after. My reverend friend thought this proved a sordid devotion to the useful in education, and an indifference to learning for its own sake.

As a manufacturer, I see the other side of the shield, and I draw a different inference. A clerk of mine is the father: he consults me on the subject: he is about to offer his son to a merchant. I find that the boy has a competent knowledge of Latin, jabbbers a little French, has worked at Colenso's algebra. Let me see his writing: set him these sums to do. The writing proves to be bad, and the arithmetic inaccurate. I advise the father to put other studies aside, and at whatever cost to get improvement in the beggarly elements. Am I therefore, to be set down as a mere utilitarian?

These parents, in sending their boys to the grammar school, have shown that they are not indifferent to education; for they might have sent them to inferior schools, where they would have been sure to learn the elements thoroughly. They know that other boys, on leaving the grammar school, have turned out bad writers or inaccurate arithmeticians: they urge on the master the importance of the lower branches of teaching, believing quite justly that the higher are secure of due attention.

Zealous friends of education often overlook such plain facts as these. As regards the lowest classes of society, I hear it said that a boy should not be allowed to work until he can read and write. A poor industrious boy applies to me for employment: can you read? no, Sir. I cannot employ

you till you have learned to read. How am I to live while I am learning? Go to the workhouse, I suppose. It comes to this, that in the eyes of thoughtless persons, school instruction is the only kind of education. To me it seems that school instruction is only secondary: that industrial education is the first and most important. An independent spirit, habits of industry, skilful hands, a power of steady and successful application to the business of life, are of vastly more importance than even intellectual cultivation.

This is an entire justification of the fathers who press on masters attention to writing and arithmetic. Without these their boys cannot earn a maintenance, and life surpasses learning.

Earnest schoolmasters too much resemble the dancing-master of M. Jourdain. Dancing is the first of arts; and the general diffusion of it would prevent the greatest misfortunes. Has a young lady compromised her reputation? She has made a *faux pas*. Has a general fallen into an ambuscade? He has made a *faux pas*. Let young women and generals learn to dance. Let a boy learn one thing thoroughly: let him have his understanding exercised: then he will take the lead wherever he finds himself, whether in counting-house or senate. Would it were so! Would that foreign letters could be written in hexameters, and ledgers be kept by the calculus!

Another grievance of the schoolmasters is the early age at which boys are removed: the clerk or small manufacturer takes his boy away at fourteen. If I were pleading before commercial London, I

should say : you cannot reproach us, for I see it stated on authority that even persons of considerable wealth among you, take their sons into their counting-houses at fourteen. But after the uncomplimentary way in which I have spoken of commercial London, this is not a justification for me to plead. I will offer a more conclusive one. Men of business believe that after fifteen, perhaps after fourteen, boys are unfit to begin the unintellectual drudgery necessary in the lower grades. A merchant tells me he likes boys to come into his counting-house at fourteen, and peremptorily declines any at sixteen : a manufacturing engineer refuses boys on the same ground. Would any wise father sacrifice his son's prospect of earning a maintenance, in order to perfect his school attainments ? It is the business of the schoolmaster to grumble : it is the duty of the father to let him grumble.

I regret to see that the Royal Commission on Grammar Schools, has reported evidence to the effect that parents are indifferent to any education which does not pay : a statement which I know to be false. For the reasons I have already assigned, I maintain that parents simply do their duty when they insist that their boys shall at any rate learn the elements necessary to their maintenance, even if other instruction should be neglected. I am sorry that the Royal Commissioners should have been deceived.

Royal Commissions are answerable for a great many mistakes, and some of them much worse than this. A few years ago, there appeared as part of the evidence laid before Parliament, in furtherance

of an inquiry into education, a monstrous slander on the young women of Dudley : quite recently, a blue book reports assertions about the master of a public school, of so offensive a nature as to be almost if not actually libellous.

As Royal Commissions are conducted, I do not see how these abominations are to be avoided. Young men are appointed as assistants, with instructions to learn all they can, by whatever means, about the matter intrusted to them. They are generally men of ability ; some, as we know, are men of supreme ability : many of them however, are quite destitute of experience, and are utterly incapable of judiciously weighing the information they receive. Their inquiries are conducted in private ; in the absence of the persons incriminated ; and without any subsequent cross-examination. Yet their evidence appears in all the pomp of a blue book.

What do we think of a newspaper which publishes such *ex parte* information ? We condemn the editor as unprincipled or malicious. Royal Commissioners are above popular censure. They tell you that these statements are only given for what they are worth : that the seal of the Commission is not put upon them. But they cannot be ignorant of what happens : they know that the purveyors for the newspapers, on the look out for everything spicy, seize eagerly on these scandalous statements, quote them as appearing in a blue book, and forget to caution the reader against believing what has only the authority of one young man, who is certainly inexperienced and possibly incompetent.

Many persons, on these and similar grounds,

condemn the whole practice of Commissions as inquisitorial and one sided; and contend that all proceedings ought to be public. The Sheffield Commission on Trades' Unions, was a public one: the evidence was reported in the daily papers: all who were aggrieved by any part of it, could appear on a subsequent day and rebut it. This, it is said, is the only safe course. I do not go so far as these objectors: I have seen in practice the great benefits which are attained by wide and informal and private inquiries. But these should be regarded just like the inquiries of a detective policeman; as guides for formal proceedings; as means of getting together evidence for one side; which evidence every person incriminated should have the means of disproving.

Where the Sheffield course of holding a public court is impossible, the evil might be corrected by publishing in the local papers all the evidence about to be reported, and by giving full means of rebutting it.

Other proceedings in connection with the Education Commission, throw some light on this question, of parents' alleged indifference.

In 1857, at the first Oxford Local Examination, Manchester did not make a brilliant appearance: the boys sent in were mostly juniors, and they did not earn many honours. Probably this proved to the parents the necessity of bestirring themselves. At any rate we find that of late years the success of the Manchester Grammar School has been remarkable. Its income is only two to three thousand a year; a fourth of that of St. Paul's, London. But with these small means it has passed in the

Oxford Local Examinations about forty boys a year, during three successive years. Of thirty-six undergraduates at Oxford and Cambridge more than half hold open scholarships or Exhibitions; successes unmatched by any other school in England.

In Birmingham, the Grammar School has an income five times as large, and does a fair quantity of work. But in connection with the Royal Commission some proceedings of the public disprove the charge of indifference to education.

On the announcement of the Commission in 1864, an association was formed for the purpose of collecting evidence and of urging certain changes. The members were of all shades of politics, of different religious denominations, and of various degrees of instruction. Some of them had been educated in the school; more were educating their sons there, or hoped to do so afterwards. Here was an opportunity for exhibiting hostility to all learning which did not pay: for decrying Latin and Greek: for claiming the application of the large funds to the instruction of the many in useful knowledge. Nothing of this kind happened. To the confusion of the prophets of ill, the demands of the association were reasonable. They were that the Governors should be partly appointed by popular election, a request that the Royal Commission has pronounced to be a fair one. It was declared that parents generally ought to pay an annual fee: that the funds so raised should be applied to the instruction of the lowest classes, and to the formation of middle class girls' schools. Instead of requiring that the classical school should cease, it was urged that that

school should be opened to all who were fit for it, by providing funds for the maintenance of poor boys who distinguished themselves in the lower schools. It was even wished by many that still higher schools should be provided for youths unable to proceed to the universities. It is futile after this, to speak of the parents as indifferent to education which does not pay: such assertions merely gratify the masters' spleen, naturally excited by losing the most promising boys, removed when under the necessity of entering on the career of life.

I will offer another proof. Thirty years ago there was throughout the kingdom, a spurt in middle class education. Many voluntary institutions arose; some of them with names of great pretension. Among them was the Proprietary School at Edgbaston, Birmingham. The founders were bold enough to banish from their curriculum all Latin and Greek verse, but insisted on the thorough teaching of both the classical languages. Of course they were set down at the time as men who valued only such education as paid. The world is now come round to their opinion, that verses may be dispensed with; and that English boys ought no more to occupy their time in becoming bad Latin poets, than in becoming bad French poets. That the committee of the school have since then been no enemies of learning, is proved by the fact that during twelve years they had as Head Master, Dr. Badham; who, taking modern as well as ancient literature into account, must be confessed to have been the finest scholar in Great Britain.

That the education given was thorough as well as

judicious, is proved by results. At the first Oxford Local Examination, the Proprietary School competed: as there was no time for special preparation, the results showed what was the *ordinary* condition of the school, and all the more because the boys sent in were more than a fifth of the whole numbers. By the confession of the London papers, this school got more honours than any other, more than were got by other schools twice or four times as large. The success of this voluntary institution, its anticipation by thirty years of the curriculum now laid down as a fit one, refutes the querulous assertions of certain masters, that parents are indifferent to all education which does not pay. Men of business know that the only education which pays, is instruction in reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic: when such men keep their sons at school after they have learnt these, when they send them to learn Latin and Greek, when they found a school for thoroughly teaching *classics* and mathematics, with French and German, and not only keep their sons there till sixteen or seventeen, but afterwards send them to the London University or even to Oxford or Cambridge, it is unjust to say that they set no value on education which does not pay: and this because they insist strongly on having a thorough foundation of elementary English instruction.

I find persons still talking and writing as if imperfections in education were confined to the middle and lower classes: assuming most weakly that the gentry and nobility are well taught and well read. Now it is conceded that our upper

classes have fewer of the faults of aristocracy than are generally found in such bodies: that they are less narrow, less selfish, less vicious, less haughty, than other aristocracies have been: that the constant and increasing pressure from below has reminded them that the permanence of their order is dependent on their conduct, and that they are rather tolerated than worshipped. But it would be base flattery which would praise their educational condition.

It happened to myself to be familiar as a youth with the education formerly given at Rugby, though I was not at school there: afterwards, I had several Eton men as class fellows: I therefore knew how miserably public schools were taught. The world has of late learned the same lesson on the authority of a Royal Commission, supported by the testimony of various masters and scholars. We may now pronounce without fear of contradiction, that the schools in which our aristocracy are brought up, are shamefully defective: that the young men leave them, ignorant of English literature, devoid of even a smattering of science, unable to write or speak French, quite incapable of unravelling a sentence of Plato, and barely able to construe a piece of Livy which they had not seen before. It is indecent for such men, and for their teachers, to carp at the imperfect education of manufacturers.

Very recently the Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, has told us in the words of another writer, what is his opinion of the undergraduates.

“I am perfectly clear that the failure of all of that class whose work I have had the opportunity of examining was not owing to special ignorance of the particular subjects required, but to ignorance

of such a nature as to render them *unfit to undergo any examination whatever*. An ignorance of the easiest principles and rudiments of language, an inextricable confusion of thought, a perfect inability to do more than guess at the meaning of a question asked, an *absence* of ordinary facility in *spelling* or constructing a sentence in *English*—these are the unhappy characteristics of the whole class.”

If anyone is weak enough to suppose that this is not true of youths of the highest classes, but that they are better taught than those of the middle classes, let him ponder Dr. Pattison’s own words. After speaking of a general dislike of reading, he says : “This temper is not generated in the university, but is already formed in the boy before he appears as a man. It is chiefly characteristic of one or two great schools, but seems to have been propagated to others, which are not known as ‘public schools.’ Spoiled by the luxury of home and early habits of self-indulgence, the young aristocrat has lost the power of commanding the attention, and is not only indisposed for, but incapable of, work. *Profound idleness and luxuriousness have corrupted his nature*. He is no longer capable of being attuned to anything. He is either the foppish exquisite of the drawing-room, or the barbarised athlete of the arena, and beyond these spheres all life is to him a blank.”

One would imagine oneself reading Gibbon and an account of the later empire. What radical orator would venture on a picture so black? The manufacturers, and even those of them who have had little school instruction, may feel the superiority of their sons, in being at any rate educated in the true sense: educated to mental exertion of some sort, if not the highest.

Dr. Pattison’s estimate of manufacturers however,

is scarcely more favourable than his estimate of the highest classes. As to the latter he believes that the men are no better than the boys: he says that he hears frequent complaints of the dearth of literature in country houses; and that perhaps there is not now a single nobleman's mansion in which the company and the tone of society is literary.

But if the rural districts are actually going backward in civilization, the towns, he thinks, are not going forward: the middle classes seem to have made no advance towards taking up the place abdicated by the aristocracy.

To prove this, we are favoured with the following uncomplimentary passage from the late Dr. Donaldson.

"The man of business is prone to acquiesce in the consciousness of his own respectability. This, in some of its outward manifestations, is the idol of his heart. If he is ambitious to be fashionable or aristocratic, it is for the sake of appearances, and he is generally found to imitate rather the expensiveness, than the refinements, of the class above him. If he lays down the law in politics or in religion he is the unconscious mouthpiece of some short-sighted utilitarian or canting bigot whom it is respectable to follow. When he sends his boys to school, he cares less for their improvement than for the credit which redounds to himself. When most satisfied with his own position he seems to care for little beyond the uncontradicted maintenance of the opinions he has adopted from his newspaper or his preacher, his personal and domestic comfort, and the decencies of his outward appearance. Abundant meals and good clothes, and a well-furnished parlour, are the extent of his wishes."

Dr. Pattison adopts this as a picture of the society of towns: of the society of Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds.

Now those who had the advantage of the late Dr. Donaldson's acquaintance, must remember that he loved above all things to make his hearers open their eyes: that if plain statements failed to do this,

a little judicious but witty addition was not wanting. Dr. Pattison, in proof of a grave proposition, has quoted a satirist.

I may be told that if I accept the Rector of Lincoln as an authority in the one case, I am bound to accept him equally in the other : but I reply that he speaks of the "young aristocrat" from his own Oxford experience, while with regard to the "man of business" he quotes the opinion of another, who, as I judge from his expression "a well furnished parlour," was thinking of the narrow society of the country town which enjoyed his services as head master of the grammar school.

The two greatest political representatives of the pure middle classes, are Mr. Bright and the late Mr. Cobden : both manufacturers. Both rose from the ill-instructed portion of society : the one being the son of a Sussex farmer ; the other being brought up in the Society of Friends, which body forty or fifty years ago had not overcome its original prejudice against profane learning. Mr. Cobden, in his earlier political life, denounced classical literature ; and I believe, to the last, retained an undue prepossession in favour of "useful" education. Mr. Bright, unless my memory deceives me, has lately with a proud humility confessed an ignorance of classical literature : not boasting of the defect but rather by implication regretting it. How indeed, could such a man boast of such a defect ! To Mr. Cobden no doubt, words were counters : to Mr. Bright they are rich coins, constituting a golden treasure : precious possessions to be patiently gathered from orators and poets, and to be stored

up in the memory for the illustration and enforcement of opinions; for the clothing and adornment of sentiment. How would Mr. Bright have loved direct commerce with Homer and Plato, with Thucydides and Demosthenes.

I confess myself to have been formerly no great admirer of Mr. Bright's statesmanship: he had supported many great measures, but I do not know that he had originated one. I disapproved of much of his political conduct: his party fidelity ran into partisanship, his vigour was disfigured by coarseness, his invective degenerated into ferocity. But I did not dispute his claim to be regarded as a true orator, as the great political word-artist. The admiration felt towards him by scholars devoid of sympathy with his character and his opinions, is extraordinary. On a late occasion when he was advertised to address his constituents, half a dozen Oxford Dons, men not belonging to the University Radical party, having the offer of good places for hearing, travelled sixty miles to and fro, for the mere pleasure of listening to that one speech.

Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright must be looked upon as men of genius; but their genius has only exaggerated the faults and the virtues of their class. The characteristics of the moderately instructed manufacturers may be seen in them.

One characteristic however, and a very unpleasant one, is entirely absent from both. All men love success: under our present social arrangements, the only striking success open to the many, is the acquisition of opulence. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright have risen to an eminence far higher than could

be attained by any degree of opulence; far higher than that of Heywoods or Salts or Thorntons or Browns: Mr. Cobden died poor, Mr. Bright is content though not a millionaire. Mr. Cobden showed an admirable sincerity and disinterestedness, in absolutely refusing office under Lord Palmerston, to whose political morals he felt an invincible repugnance. The work of office he would have enjoyed; the salary would have been acceptable: but to have served under Lord Palmerston was incompatible with his self-respect.

Ordinary men however, cannot reach this grand position: they must be resigned to distinctions such as can be obtained by success in their every day occupations: to rise above their fellows they must get riches. An unnatural and unhappy importance is thus attached to the possession of a great fortune, and the detestable vice of pursepride follows.

The existence of this pursepride is the result of circumstances, and it may seem therefore, that we have no right to censure it severely. But however true it may be that the vice is inevitable, and that any other men so placed would be just as much infected, the fact remains that the state of mind though little blameable is thoroughly odious. The same may be said of all class faults: they are the results of circumstances. The morgue of an aristocracy, the craft and cruelty of Red Indians, the infanticide of China, the predatory habits of our criminal classes, are generally the results of circumstances; and most of the individuals composing the classes are to be pitied rather than condemned: but all these vices, however little blameable, are certainly

odious. Therefore I say of a purseproud man : I do not censure him, I only hate him.

Pursepride is of course the reverse of widespread : it can corrupt but a few : it is peculiar to an oligarchy, though accompanied with little direct political power : it is comparatively rare in districts where fortunes are pretty equally distributed.

It is a mistake too, to assert that money is especially valued among traders as compared with others. I have seen more bowing down to wealth by professional men, than I have ever seen among men of business. Physicians, clergymen, and barristers earn their incomes painfully ; they set a high value on what is so hard to come at : manufacturers by comparison earn their incomes easily ; they set a high value on honours which to them are quite inaccessible. Manufacturers' sons are not brought up to believe that it is their duty to marry rich wives : fortune hunting is far from them : their marriages are not arranged, as in France, by parents and their notaries, with the question, how much the father will give his daughter. Persons who make money with tolerable ease, do not set an exorbitant value upon it : they would be delighted if other and higher honours than mere fortune were open, if not to themselves, at any rate to their sons. Talk to an old colonel who has got a step ; he values it for the additional pay : congratulate him on his son's marriage to a charming girl ; he shrugs his shoulders, for she has no fortune : he could have forgiven any amount of vulgarity in a daughter in law with five hundred a year. These men are not purseproud, because they have no purse to be proud of ; but the pinch of genteel poverty

has sharpened their eagerness for gold. After all, many manufacturers are purseproud and odious.

I must add that the vice is found mainly among those who have no other claim to distinction. The wealthiest of my acquaintance are quite exempt from it: but they are men who have inherited their capitals, and who have received a high education.

Much has been written of late about what is described in capital letters as Commercial Immorality: the literary class are not ill pleased to find a gaping joint in the armour of their natural antagonists, the traders.

Certain vast financial scandals in England are only too notorious: they have robbed the press of the dear delight of commenting at their ease on French delinquencies; on the extravagant and illegal outlay on Paris by Baron Haussman; on the excesses of the *Crédit Mobilier* and the *Compagnie Immobilière*; on the sudden fortune of the St. Simonian Pereires and their friends, now to be much reduced by the restitution of a million or two millions sterling.

If however, the gentlemen of the press have lost their natural right of censuring the French, they have been more than compensated by English disclosures; by the hundred scandals typified in the Royal Bank of Liverpool and the Limited Company of Overend and Gurney.

As to the former it must be confessed that some of the circumstances almost surpass the inventions of Jacob Omnium Higgins in his younger days. This unhappy bank has stopped payment twice. The earlier failure was strange enough: since it turned out (if I may trust my memory) that a sum exceeding

half a million was owing on one private account; that is, that more than all the paid up capital had been advanced to one firm. It appeared however, that in the end no loss resulted; the securities held by the bank proving sufficient to recoup the enormous advance. The manager at the time of the stoppage was so ashamed and humiliated, that he voluntarily renounced all future salary, until the finances of the bank were restored; and that the finances were afterwards restored cannot of course, be disputed, since the public learnt through the press that the disinterested manager had drawn the arrears of his salary.

All this was strange enough. To me it appeared the more strange because I remembered the founding of the bank. I was visiting Liverpool; and a very kind friend, an elderly merchant of great wealth and of unspotted integrity, told me that, disgusted with the ephemeral character of the new joint stock banks, he and some friends had resolved on founding a Royal Bank, with a capital of half a million paid up, and with rules of management that would set an example of soundness. Years afterwards, when the bank failed, the victim perhaps of a plethora of good intentions and consequent high credit, the old merchant was in his grave, but my astonishment was great. As to the second failure I say no more: the incidents are too notorious and too recent, to require or bear comment.

Overend and Gurney's case was more astounding, and had peculiarities of its own. In joint stock banks, managers play with the property of others, but these great money dealers staked their own.

Wealthy Quakers, frowning at the suggestion of horse race or bet or sixpenny whist, gambled with hundreds of thousands, and lost four millions in seven years: they relieved the satiety of wealth by financing instead of roulette, by hazarding millions instead of hundreds. Their simplicity was corrupted: like other gamblers, they began as pigeons and ended as rooks.

The gentlemen of the press were indignant and pitiless. When criminal proceedings were instituted; why, said they, should we maunder over the fate of these great offenders, while we rejoice in the punishment of a shabby swindler or receiver? I answer that when a swindler or a receiver gets his due, I rejoice; and if I am unacquainted with his history, my sympathy is not excited: but if I have known him before as a respectable man, and if I have traced his downward career step by step, and if I find that he acutely feels his degradation, then I do pity him from my heart. Now I claim the right of feeling for an offender on a large scale, what I feel for an offender on a small scale.

Declamations against dishonesty however well founded and useful, often run into exaggeration. Where, we are asked, is the former reputation of the British merchant, whose word was as good as his bond, and whose bond was current through the world? As far as I know, the bond and the word of the British trader are as good and as current as they ever were.

Let us see how the merchants of George the Second's reign were described by Mandeville.

“To pass by the innumerable Artifices, by which

Buyers and Sellers out-wit one another, that are daily allowed of and practised among the fairest of *Dealers*, show me the *Tradesman* that has always discover'd the Defects of his Goods to those that cheapen'd them; nay, where will you find one that has not at one time or other industriously conceal'd them to the detriment of the *Buyer*? Where is the Merchant that has never against his Conscience extoll'd his Wares beyond their Worth, to make them go off the better?

“*Decio*, a man of great Figure, that had large Commissions for Sugar from several parts beyond Sea, treats about a considerable parcel of that Commodity with *Alcander* an eminent *West-India* Merchant; both understood the Market very well, but could not agree; *Decio* was a Man of Substance, and thought no body ought to buy cheaper than himself; *Alcander* was the same, and not wanting Money, stood for his Price. While they were driving their Bargain at a Tavern near the *Exchange*, *Alcander's* Man brought his Master a Letter from the *West Indies*, that inform'd him of a much greater quantity of Sugar coming for *England* than was expected. *Alcander* now wish'd for nothing more than to sell at *Decio's* price, before the News was publick; but being a cunning Fox, that he might not seem too precipitant, nor yet lose his Customer, he drops the Discourse they were upon, and putting on a Jovial Humour, commends the Agreeableness of the Weather, from whence falling upon the Delight he took in his Gardens, invites *Decio* to go along with him to his Country-House, that was not above Twelve Miles from *London*. It was in the Month

of *May*, and, as it happened, upon a *Saturday* in the Afternoon: *Decio*, who was a single Man, and would have no business in Town before *Tuesday*, accepts of the other's Civility, and away they go in *Alcander's* Coach. *Decio* was splendidly entertain'd that Night and the Day following; the *Monday* Morning, to get himself an Appetite, he goes to take the Air upon a Pad of *Alcander's*, and coming back meets with a Gentleman of his Acquaintance, who tells him News was come the Night before that the *Barbadoes* Fleet was destroy'd by a Storm, and adds, that before he came out it had been confirm'd at *Lloyd's* Coffee-House, where it was thought Sugars would rise 25 *per Cent.* by Change-time. *Decio* returns to his Friend, and immediately resumes the Discourse they had broke off at the Tavern: *Alcander*, who thinking himself sure of his Chap, did not design to have moved it till after Dinner, was very glad to see himself so happily prevented; but how desirous soever he was to sell, the other was yet more eager to buy; yet both of them afraid of one another, for a considerable time counterfeited all the Indifference imaginable; 'till at last *Decio* fired with what he had heard, thought that Delays might prove dangerous, and throwing a Guinea upon the Table, struck the Bargain at *Alcander's* Price. The next Day they went to *London*; the News prov'd true, and *Decio* got Five Hundred Pounds by his Sugars. *Alcander*, whilst he had strove to over-reach the other, was paid in his own Coin: yet all this is called fair dealing; but I am sure neither of them would have desired to be done by, as they did to each other."

Let us come down seventy years later. We imagine, when we see at the present day the frequent cases of speculation and embezzlement, that these are new phenomena. Jeremy Bentham gives us a sample of what happened towards the middle of George the Third's Reign.

“It was but the other day that a very respectable society, instituted for the most benevolent of purposes, lost in this way more than half its funds. They were in a single hand: board management would have saved them. Is board management therefore necessary? By no means. The man in whose hands they were lodged had nothing of his own: no pecuniary security had been required of him. Legal powers were wanting: no authority to examine him—no court to summon him to. He would give in no accounts: perhaps he had kept none. What he had, he gave: fine sentiments and fine periods in plenty. He was a gentleman: he had given his time for nothing: the same benevolence that had prompted others to give their money, had prompted him to receive it. Was such a man to be questioned? Questions import suspicion. Suspicion, by a man of fine feelings, is only to be answered by defiance.

“Not long ago, another man ran away, having been detected in a course of fraud, by which he had gained to the amount of some thousand pounds at the expense of a parish. How came this? He, too, was a gentleman: serving the public without pay, he was not to be suspected. He gave in accounts from time to time, such as they were; but, not being published and distributed, they were accessible

only to a few, who had too much good manners and too much faith to look at them.

“Neither is board management, even where carried on without pay, by any means exempt from peculation. I have instances in my eye; but what is not public, cannot be mentioned publicly. Nor can instances be wanting to any one who has read the instructive but melancholy view given by Howard in his book on Lazarettos, of the state of the charities in Ireland. In England, parochial peculation is become proverbial.

“One of the Scipios, being in a pecuniary office, was called upon for his accounts:—‘Gentlemen,’ said he, ‘this day so many months, I got a prodigious victory.’ ‘*Scipio for ever!*’ was the cry, ‘*and no accounts!*’ According to the mob of Scipio’s days, and according to the mob of historians of all days, the author of the motion was a calumniator: according to others, Scipio had a good countenance, and knew the people he had to deal with. In Scipio’s case, were I guilty, and bold enough, I would do exactly as Scipio did. Were I innocent, I should regard the obligation of publishing accounts not as a *burthen*, but as a privilege.”

So much for Mandeville and Bentham: for George the Second’s reign and for George the Third’s reign. Neither was impeccable.

I would not yield to Mandeville any more authority than is due to him; but I ask myself whether even a satirist would now attribute to two traders, the one “a man of great figure,” and the other “an eminent merchant,” such laboriously sharp practice in the conduct of their ordinary business, as that

described in my quotation? I answer that he might attribute such practice to bookmakers on the turf, to speculators in time bargains, to traders addicted to *financing*, to reckless adventurers in the Liverpool cotton trade since 1861; but not to persons engaged in the regular course of business. If a writer did attribute such conduct to the ordinary trader, that would seem to me unjust beyond the legitimate bounds of satire. I judge thus, from a rather long experience of mercantile practices.

As to speculation and embezzlement, I think it probable that these offences are less common than formerly in public affairs; more common in private affairs: less common in public affairs, because experience has resulted in more stringent checks; more common in private affairs, because the increased scale of business has compelled principals to trust more to subordinates. The absolute number of offences however, proves nothing. How many offences are committed in proportion to the opportunities offered? that is the question. Private speculation and embezzlement are rare in Tipperary, and are unknown in Tartary: we do not therefore laud the untried honesty of Tipperary and Tartary.

Coming down the stream of time once more, and comparing the period of thirty years ago with the present, I do not find any change for the worse. Now, as then, half the transactions which take place are not confirmed by writing, and are therefore not enforceable under the Statute of Frauds: now, as then, it is a most rare circumstance for either party to a bargain to refuse to fulfil it.

It will be said however, that conceding the accu-

racy of my statements, enough remains to justify the charge of widespread commercial immorality ; since I have admitted that there exist among certain moneydealers, bankers, makers of time bargains, and speculators in produce, many practices condemned by every code of morals.

I reply that the term commercial immorality, conveys to the reader a charge against the commercial classes at large, as though an indictment were preferred against traders generally in their ordinary transactions : whereas the misdeeds complained of are confined to certain classes, who at times make a great noise in the world, and therefore divert public attention from the steady current of everyday affairs, carried on for the most part with undeviating honesty. It is in speculating and financing that men's morals get corrupted.

I must repeat also, that these malpractices are not peculiar to commercial men ; but that speculation and financing have among its votaries, peers and parsons, physicians and professors, squires and schoolmasters, baronets, barristers, and blacklegs ; all in short who have money or credit with which to pay first calls on concerns that seem capable of being floated at a premium.

Commercial Immorality is an ill chosen name if it is intended to express immorality in speculation and financing ; an immorality shared by men taken from all classes of society, but indignantly repudiated by the wiser men of the commercial classes. The vice complained of is not commercial immorality but *pecuniary immorality*.

Have we never heard of such a thing as official

corruption? We generally regard the English as being free from this taint; and I believe that comparatively they are so. Yet we have recently seen two clerks convicted of a conspiracy to obtain a bribe from a contractor for timber. A journal of the highest class has admitted a statement, anonymous certainly, charging a manufacturer in the north with having offered £5,000 to an officer sent down from London to superintend the fulfilment of a contract: and with having offered it as the *customary* perquisite. I have heard it said that in certain barracks, no forage can be supplied without a *douceur* to the inferior officers. I hear on all sides that on some railways the salaries of the officers have been eked out to a disgraceful extent, by commissions and by presents from contractors. In all these cases the conscientious trader stands aloof and declines the business: the corruption begins with the officers.

I have had a good deal to do with official persons in the way of contracts, and I hope it may please heaven to spare me from any further dealings with them. I have no complaint to make of corruption however: what I dislike is the formality and tedium incident to all their dealings. I have always been fortunate enough to meet with persons of undeviating honesty. Some years ago an Italian called on me, and after discussing private business, told me that he was going on to the Tower to offer some timber. Might he ask a question? After some hesitation he inquired whether he might offer a perquisite to the inspector of small arms. I said he certainly might; but that he would do well to first put the door wide open, that the kicking Mr. Lovell would give him

might be the shortest possible. He thanked me and explained that in every continental state such things were done. Some years later however, there was corruption in connection with that very office, but not on the part of Mr. Lovell, who was a most highminded man. We have not with all our efforts succeeded in eradicating official vice: nor can we expect to do so, since the highest departments of government sometimes commit impudent robberies.

Take the case of Greece as lately stated in the Pall Mall Gazette. The three great Powers, as we know, England, France, and Russia, while emancipating the Greeks from the Turkish yoke, advanced large sums of money, or guaranteed the payment of sums advanced by others. But "the Powers," say the Greeks, "did not advance the money to Greece to be used as Greece pleased. . . . They advanced the money nominally to the Greek government, but they dictated absolutely the mode in which it was to be expended; they subjected it to stoppages and deductions of every description to gratify their own fancies or to *serve their own jobs*."

Then follows a summary of the Greek National Debt, taken from the Edinburgh Review; and this proves the truth of the Greek statement.

	Amount Advanced.	Reached the Greek Treasury.
	£.	£.
1823. Lent by London Bankers . . .	800,000	800,000
1825. " " " . . .	2,000,000	920,000
1832. Guaranteed by the three Powers	2,400,000	200,000
Afterwards from Bavaria	200,000	200,000
	5,400,000	2,120,000

It appears then, that besides arrears of interest, Greece owes nearly $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions £: but that the money she actually received was little more than 2 millions £. This is an example of financing worthy of our recent Limited Companies.

I am not foolish enough to imagine that official corruption, or national corruption, excuses the iniquitous proceedings of banks or credit companies or bubble railways: I only contend that pecuniary immorality is widespread, and is improperly attributed to the commercial classes, as though it were peculiar to them.

Some thoughtless people, I believe, appeal to Schedule D of the Income Tax, and ask what sort of morality that is which robs the Treasury of a large part of its dues. I concede that by the world at large, to evade a tax is regarded as a venial offence: many persons who will not make a false return, will escape payment if they can do so without lying. Adam Smith tells us that in his day, if a man affected to hesitate about buying smuggled goods, his scruple was regarded as "a pedantic piece of hypocrisy," and exposed the man to be deemed "a greater knave than most of his neighbours." Even now there are many vulgar minded people who go further than evasion. Soon after the income tax was first imposed, a small trader a few miles from Birmingham, was under examination by the Commissioners; and being asked whether he kept a horse, he said he did not. The conversation was overheard by the persons in the anteroom; and as the man came out his neighbours asked him how he dare deny that he kept a horse.—Hush, you fools,

answered the man, it's a mare.—If this were a fair sample of commercial morality, no name would be too bad for it.

To get fairly assessed however, is no easy matter. About the date of the grotesque lie I have quoted, a firm within my own knowledge, made an exact return of their profits: they were required to appear before the Special Commissioner: the local surveyor, who had an interest in raising the amount, nevertheless reported himself satisfied: yet the Commissioner, a mild and weakminded old gentleman, proposed to add several hundred pounds to the assessment, with a threat of requiring the production of books and papers if this proposal were rejected.

Such treatment would not justify the falsifying future returns: but I have no doubt that in the eyes of many persons, it would justify a return so much under the mark as to allow for an anticipated surcharge.

Fifty years ago, the makers of exciseable articles generally evaded a part of the tax. A great window glass manufacturer, of scrupulous conscience, explained to me that before his time it was almost impossible to be honest, because every exciseman who was not bribed, looked upon a manufacturer as his natural enemy, and could not be made to believe that he would act honourably. There was a state of avowed war. Even before the repeal of the duty, matters had been put on a better footing: but there was great difficulty in getting the old subordinates to unlearn the lessons of their youth, and to abstain from a little doing of the exciseman. If the

Income-Tax Commissioners assumed all returns to be false, they would go far to make them all false.

A recent report of the Inland Revenue Department, attempts to estimate the extent and amount of the evasions: the conclusion is that 3 persons out of 5 make correct returns; but that the fraudulent persons err so grossly that they return less than 44 millions £, instead of 100 millions £. The annual loss to the Treasury, when the tax is 6d. in the £, is the large sum of a million and a half.

The Commissioners arrived at these results, by comparing the returns made under the Income-Tax, with the claims made for compensation, by London traders whose premises had been taken by railways or by the Board of Works. I take the facts from a summary given in the Daily News. The editor suggests that perhaps the Commissioners are wrong in applying to the whole country a rule founded on returns in London, where the Surveyor of Taxes necessarily knows little of the affairs of his neighbours; while even in the greatest of other towns, the local Commissioners can form a tolerable estimate of the gains of all considerable persons. Besides; it must be remembered that the whole statement is *ex parte*, and might be much modified by cross examination, or by a House of Commons debate. It might turn out, that the difference arises more from the excessive claims for compensation than from the defect in returns. The immorality may be much the same in both cases; though perhaps we might censure with some leniency, the man who was turned out of his place of business and in his annoyance made an exaggerated claim; and

with greater severity another who, left to himself, had actually realized profits under shelter of the government, and had by a lie or a trick evaded payment for the services rendered.

Conceding however, that there exists a low tone of morality in all such matters: that men, strictly honourable in private life, will not volunteer an income-tax return if their name has slipped out of the surveyor's list: that others, quite incapable of a false statement, will make no return and will pay only what the Commissioners demand even though this is less than the true amount: that the occupiers of houses worth £200 a year will be quite happy to pay local rates at an assessment of £100: the question still remains whether this is a proof of Commercial Immorality.

These evasions and concealments are immoral: granted; but are they peculiar to commercial people? Schedule D, which robs the Treasury and the taxpayers of half a million or a million and a half a year, does not consist of traders only. There are also barristers, physicians, clergymen, solicitors. I might also mention proctors; and the world has not forgotten the startling evasion of tax by certain gentlemen of this vocation, and the diminished compensation they got when their office was abolished.

Perhaps we might have expected peculiar strictness in the clergy, if we did not know that their incomes are generally very narrow and much trenched on by parish necessities; and if also we had not learnt by experience, that dogmatic theology little tends to the enforcement of simple honesty. If I talk to one of my clerical friends about a piece of

preferment, I always hear that the Clergy List represents it as so much, and therefore of course it is worth more. I know that the clergy spend beyond their means on education and charity; but I do not believe them to be especially scrupulous.

Some few medical men, I am told, make a return beyond their income: they believe that nothing succeeds like success; and they pay the additional tax to advertise a lie.

As to solicitors I do not share the vulgar belief that all of them are unscrupulous. On the contrary, I know by experience that the best of them are singularly honourable. No doubt, a solicitor has many opportunities of doing legally, things which are injurious to the client and which are profitable only in swelling the bill of costs: I have known cases of ignorant persons whose little hoard has been thus filched from them, and all under cover of legality. But the better solicitors, educated to scorn pettifoggery, think of their clients only, and leave their bills of costs to honest growth. The profession reminds me in this respect of the American slave-owners, of whom Miss Martineau said, that however much the ordinary ones were damaged in temper, the few who resisted the evil influences were invigorated by the successful struggle, and attained an unfailing self-control unknown to less trained men.

But I have no reason to think that the lawyers make their income-tax returns more truthfully than the traders. When the tax was imposed in 1842, the solicitors around me met together to determine how the profits should be calculated. Among the number was S—, a wealthy man who would feel with

Adam Smith's contemporaries, that it was mere hypocrisy to profess a scruple about evading a tax. After much talk, S— said emphatically that he did not see how he could do it. No S—, said another, your difficulty is not how to do *it*, but how to do *them*.

Granting then that a large proportion of persons in Schedule D, pay less than they ought, I still deny that this is any proof of the existence of commercial immorality: I say that it is a proof of immorality among all the taxpayers who earn their incomes; among proctors and bankers, medical men and manufacturers, clergy and merchants, editors and retail dealers.

It is invidious to attribute to the commercial classes, the dishonest concealments and crooked accounts shared by all classes, in financing and speculation, and to attribute to the commercial classes the evasions of income tax equally practised by all classes who live by their industry, and from which landlords and fundholders are exempt because they lack the opportunity.

VI.

I SAY then, that there is among manufacturers every variety of culture: that the lowest in the scale has a position like that of the farmer of a few acres, though he is as superior to him in understanding as the skilled mechanic is superior to the ploughman. But avoiding the extremes, I find that the ordinary manufacturer is intelligent but rather narrow: that he is favourable to school instruction, but justly estimates still more highly that industrial

education which gives skill, steadiness, and a pride of independence: that his mind is not overstrained by pecuniary speculations, because he knows that in the long run he is secure of success through his good and careful management: that he is temperate and domestic; being too intent on his affairs to lose time and health in excesses, and too busy to be driven by ennui into vice: that he is inelegant and careless of æsthetical considerations, but free from those pretences which are the worst of vulgarities: that he is firm and self-reliant; a little dogmatical and impatient of contradiction, and when very successful apt to run into purplepride: puritanical in his belief, but with a singular tolerance fostered by daily intercourse with Romanists and Unitarians, Baptists and Colensoites, Plymouth Brethren and Ritualists; giving the foremost place to the clergy of whatever denomination, but jealously repressing priestly interference: that he is radical in his politics, but possessed with a horror of revolution, and free even from that political bitterness, which flourishes most in county and cathedral towns among the excluded classes; with abundant loyalty to the throne and respect for the Lords, but resentful of every attempt to curtail individual liberty: that he is on the whole, what the Ohio farmer is to the United States, the backbone of the nation; sturdy, self-reliant, industrious, enterprising, greedy of success, patriotic, a lover of peace, but a greater lover of the honour of his nation.

One may apply to him, as to other traders, what M. Belly has lately said of Americans and middle class Englishmen, as compared with French emigrants.

“ Rien n'est plus triste, au point de vue plastique, que nos groupes chétifs, irréguliers, sans noblesse d'attitude, comparés avec les groupes superbes de cette fière famille anglo-saxonne qu'on rencontre sur tous les océans. Il y a peut-être un peu de dureté dans ces masques dédaigneux ; mais quelle fermeté de plans, quelle blancheur de teint, quelle abondance de cheveux, quel éclat de vie surtout et quelle vigueur morale dans ces hautes statures ! Disons-le franchement, ils sentent qu'ils sont des hommes libres, et nous sentons que nous ne le sommes pas ! ”

This almost justifies the rant of Goldsmith, which fired the blood of old Johnson.

Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by.

IRELAND AND THE TENURE OF LAND.

I.

IRELAND is the opprobrium of Great Britain. To readers of foreign literature it is humiliating to see extravagant praises of English institutions, followed by pity and censure of Irish miseries: to find an author heaping up eulogiums of our liberal but regulated government, of our freedom from centralization, of our unshackled press, of our dignified moderation in European politics; and then solacing himself for his laborious candour, by reminding the world of the iniquitous bigotry of our forefathers, and by adopting as grave truth the satirical cartoon of Punch, where Queen Victoria, pointing to maps of Poland and Ireland, says to the Czar Nicholas; Brother, brother, we are both in the wrong.

A century ago, the Irish were in ordinary years amply supplied with potatoes: the iron pot constantly replenished, was found on the floor of every cabin, though otherwise bare of furniture; and was at the service of parents and children and fowls, without exclusion even of the pig and the beggar. Milk too was commonly obtained. There still continued the cottier system; under which the peasant had a corner of land, with grass enough for a cow,

on condition of working for his landlord when he was wanted, on wages of 4d. or 6d. a day.

This organization was a more advanced one than serfdom; in which the peasant is legally bound to the soil, and is required, as still in some provinces of Russia, to give a large part of his time as a *corvée* to his lord's service, without any payment of wages. The social condition of the Irish peasants however, was little better than that of serfs: the Protestant squireens of that rough period looking upon the Papists as a conquered race; and in their rollicking humours thinking no more of knocking them down, than a Mandarin thinks of rattling the bamboo on the heads of the people.

Unfortunately, as time went on, the social degradation remained, while the abundance of food disappeared. The population multiplied, unrestrained by fears of a family; and in the absence of organized relief of the poor, even driven to early marriage, by the desire of rearing up children to save the parent in his sickness or dotage, from dying on a dunghheap. The Irishman felt as the Chinese, that one of the three curses was to want a son in old age.

In the pressure which followed, strangers came and competed for the landlord's work, offering to take the 6d. or 4d. a day without the cow's grass: thus the cottier system came to an end, and the people generally learnt to depend on wages when they could get them, but more commonly on the potatoes which they could raise for themselves, on a patch of ground rented at an exorbitant rate. Poverty, hunger, and discontent, were universal: mendicancy flourished: secret societies ran riot.

The rebellion of 1798 must have aggravated the previous animosity of the subject race: the atrocities of the victorious party, the burnings and floggings and hangings, might have been forgotten; but the insults and outrages inflicted by the Protestants on the Roman Catholic women, would never be forgiven and would remain as a legacy of hatred even to the present day: just as the wanton oppression practised by the French under Napoleon, still ferments in the minds of the Prussians.

During the first half of the present century, the process of gradual deterioration went on: the population still grew; the overcropped ground became less and less capable of yielding nutritious potatoes; and at last came that mortal famine, too frightful to dwell upon, which directly, or by the exodus it provoked, reduced the population from about eight to less than six millions of souls. Such an amazing diminution, if it had been predicted and believed, would have been anticipated as a certain cure for want and discontent: yet in fact, it is the reduced population which has indulged in the mischievous follies of Fenianism; and however true it may be that the American civil war formed the leaders who organized that outbreak, it is equally true that it was the existence of combustible materials at home which made the conspiracy dangerous or even possible.

Some friends of enlightenment may blame me, if I conjecture that the national system of education has at present aggravated the political difficulty. In my last essay I ventured on an opinion, that the growth of democracy in England had resulted from

the advance of material, intellectual, and moral, well-being; which had made men fitter to govern themselves, and more capable of combining to demand their rights: in the same way, the improved education of Ireland must have elevated the peasantry above the miseries of the moment; it must have raised them in the scale of being; it must have increased their constancy, and their resolution to fly from the land they hate, to take vengeance on us whom they regard as heretical oppressors, hateful to man and to God. The Southern American States were prudent in denying instruction to negroes whom they resolved to keep in slavery: the English first granted political emancipation to the Irish, and then industriously supplied them with schools; but as yet they have not converted them into friends, and by instructing them they have made their enemies dangerous. I do not regret the course that has been taken: on the contrary, I praise the magnanimity of my countrymen, who corrected the faults of their progenitors without nicely inquiring about immediate results to themselves. In the end we shall reap our just reward, when the Irish, pacified and inured to steady industry, shall have learnt, like the Scotch, to regard themselves as a part of a great and beneficent empire.

In the mean time, one circumstance which indicates a growth of intelligence and self-reliance, looks also to a Protestant who is distrustful of clerical influence, full of hope for the future: I mean the diminished influence of the Roman Catholic Church, as exhibited in the Fenian movement. The priests have strong personal sympathies with the peasants, from whose

ranks indeed most of them have sprung; they share their undying antipathy to the heretical Saxon: but the laws of their church, enforced by their superiors, compel them to denounce Fenianism as an association held together by secret oaths. The laity, and generally the lower and more superstitious strata of them, have set the priestly censures at defiance: and though it is a frightful spectacle to witness a hatred so bitter that to sate it these men will risk their souls' salvation, yet there is some compensation in the thought that the lay will is less submissive than formerly to sacerdotal rule.

II.

SUCH is the present condition of the peasantry; and we hear on every side, the question, what should be done? How can we hasten the time when the Irish shall arrive at industry, prudence, well-being, and content? Centuries ago, as we are told, there existed throughout Scotland, apathy, improvidence, poverty, and dissatisfaction, such as those we see across the Channel: even when Adam Smith wrote, a hundred years ago, Scottish agricultural wages were lower by a third than the poor six shillings a week of England: since that time, a gradual improvement has taken place; the agricultural wages of North and South Britain have been about equalized; and the Scotch have become a singularly thriving and contented race. Time and constancy in well doing, will no doubt bring Ireland up to this standard.

A just impatience however, possesses us; and

makes it intolerable to wait upon slow footed time: we are not content with less than a rapid cure: where is this to be found?

Many excellent persons believe that there is a remedy within our reach: that the "magic of property" has thaumaturgic power enough to regenerate the peasantry: that if we could but convert the renters of land into owners, there would be at once a touch of the wand, such as to confer those virtues which make orderly citizens and good subjects. The German and French peasant proprietors, it is alleged, are industrious, saving, and peaceable; too intent on their own affairs to tolerate revolutionary disturbance: put small patches of land into the absolute possession of Irishmen, and the same good qualities will be developed.

The advantages and evils attendant on peasant proprietorship, have been fully discussed; and may be found treated in the pages of Sismondi, McCulloch, and Mill; as well as in a variety of French treatises, such as the monographs in M. Le Play's *Ouvriers Européens*, and M. Legoyt's *Morcellement*. The French generally perplex the question, by mixing up the political with the economical view of it; by appealing to the principles of '89, to liberty, equality, fraternity; and by assuming that as an equal division of landed property is essential to the maintenance of those principles, any economical disadvantages of *morcellement*, must be disregarded as comparatively unimportant.

In other respects, the French discussions, though interesting, bear little on the Irish question. Under the testamentary provisions of the Code Napoléon,

backed by public sentiment, the land, like all other property, is generally partitioned equally among the children; and as by an absurd provision, still uncorrected, every child can claim a portion of each separate plot, a *parcellaire* division is frequently made, and with most injurious consequences. It is stoutly maintained that the number of proprietors does not increase; and we may think that this is not improbable, when we remember that the population of France is nearly stationary; but the registry, which ought to decide the question, cannot be relied on; for though every new proprietor is careful to be entered, in order to make good his title, the man who parts with his land, has no strong motive for cancelling his previous entry; and therefore it is believed that the same land appears again and again under different names.

These collateral issues are of little value for our purpose: we are not at present concerned with any proposal to adopt a system of compulsory partition at death, nor with the important question of a registry of titles. What we want to know, is whether peasant proprietorship is a probable and safe cure for Irish social diseases.

On the negative side many objections have been adduced: that to a man of small means land is the worst of investments, since it pays far less than five per cent., while the price of it used as farming capital would pay three or four times as much: that the Irish peasant could not be prevented from selling his land under the pressure of bad seasons; nor from mortgaging it, as the French do to a vast extent: that a father would bring up his sons on his land, and would

probably divide and subdivide it recklessly; and that we cannot anticipate an immediate adoption of French prudence as to marriage: that in short the Irish peasantry have not been trained to possession, and could only be gradually brought into such habits as would fit them to go alone, without the aiding influence of the richer classes.

I do not pretend to enforce these objections: but there is another, which as far as I remember has been unnoticed, and which may possibly weigh with other persons as it does with me.

It is alleged that the continental peasant proprietors are industrious, frugal, self-denying, careful not to marry and bring up children whom they cannot support: that their only improvidence arises from their passion for land, which they desire as a means of local importance, and which therefore, they too often buy and mortgage. How happy would it be, we are told, if the Irish could be brought to such industry and prudence, even at the expense of a little overcovetousness of property.

I will confine my remarks to the country of which I know most, not personally indeed, but by reading and conversation. A French gentleman was one day vehemently insisting on the virtues of the peasants: on their resignation to the scantiest and cheapest food, their parsimony in dress and furniture, their prudence in marriage, their unflagging and extreme industry, their abstinence from all pleasures which could possibly interfere with their gains. I asked my friend whether he regarded insufficient maintenance and excessive work, as good things or bad. Apparently, he regarded them as good things, when they

were voluntary. For myself I regarded them as bad things, whether voluntary or not; and the question arose, whether that was a virtue which led the peasant to condemn himself, his wife, and his children, to lifelong penury, for the sake of possessing or increasing his little estate.

Since that conversation, I have for many years pondered the problem, and I have applied to its solution my observations as a manufacturer, on the mode of life of the higher artisans, who may fairly be ranked with peasant proprietors.

It has been my good fortune to witness in the workmen around me, a considerable improvement as to sobriety and prudence: I see less drunkenness and less improvidence than formerly. There cannot be two opinions as to the value of this change. But when I look below the surface, when I divide men into classes, putting the moderately saving together, and the very saving together, I have my doubts as to the superiority of the very saving. I find these latter parsimonious in their own expenditure, slovenly in their appearance, with an industry and a love of gain so possessing them as to shut out the slightest interest in other persons: I see their wives slaves, their children early employed and worked beyond their strength: as to education, reading and writing and arithmetic must be picked up somehow, but any further acquirements do not pay: in short, everything is to yield to getting and saving. I cannot praise such a mode of life: I even deem it detestable: and much as I deprecate improvidence, I find it difficult to believe that avarice is any better; unless we adopt the monstrous paradox of Mandeville,

that private vices are public benefits. As a student of political economy, I protest against the doctrine that to heap up capital is the whole economical duty of man : I maintain that to distribute wisely is quite as important.

I find among the middle ranks to which I belong, the same virtue and the same vice ; in some persons idleness, in many, a reckless expenditure : if I compare these with others, who exhibit a lifelong industry, a sleepless frugality, and an anxious search for profitable investments, a devotion in short to getting rich, a refusal to take any part in municipal affairs or educational and philanthropic enterprises, and an absolute closing of the purse to all appeals on behalf of voluntary institutions, I am of opinion that the generous and public-spirited man is the far better citizen, even though he should fail to make much provision for his family or for his own old age.

III.

IT will be remembered that I am not discussing the subject of peasant proprietorship generally ; but that I am confining myself to the question, whether that organization is favourable to a good moral condition. I concede that it promotes industry, frugality, and prudence in every respect except as to the improvident purchase of land : but I have mentioned my suspicion that it leads to the odious vice of avarice with its attendant sordidness and selfishness ; such as I find among some of our own artisans and our own middle classes.

I have met with a confirmation of my suspicions

in a statement by a respectable authority, that where the father of a family retains his property in his own hands, the sons make little scruple of openly declaring their impatience for succeeding to the land.

Another authority is so remarkable, that I propose to quote it at some length. I refer to a work of M. Ernest Legouvé, a well known writer, and a member of the French Academy: I am happy to see that the popular voice has called for a fourth edition.

M. Legouvé's testimony has the greater weight, because it is not advanced for any political purpose: he is not a publicist but an essayist: he is a moralist at the most, criticising the parental and filial relations of the day. The book is called *Fathers and Children in the Nineteenth Century*; and it will be obvious that the treatment of each topic is slight, when I say that in 350 small pages there are 16 essays. Among the titles are *Messieurs les Enfants* (untranslatable); *Journal of a Father*; *Imagination in Games*; *Corporal Punishment*; *Tenderness and Authority*.

One chapter, that on Aristocratic and Democratic Politeness, proves that the author shares the ordinary French democratic sentiments. He tells us that at a friend's house he found himself in the company of a nobleman of the *Vieille Roche*; who entered into a discussion with the host on aristocratic and democratic manners. The old nobleman had smiled sardonically at some unpoliteness of the host's son, and he found himself taken to task for his habitual contempt towards the manners of modern Paris. When

pressed to justify himself, he exonerated the young man from any special blame, but charged him with being infected with a democratic disorder which he would rather describe than define.

“Your son was sitting by a charming girl, but did not speak to her, nor help her, nor pick up her glove.

“This is his offence,” said the father, laughing; “he was timid and awkward towards a young woman.

“Stop a bit! If he was bashful with her, he was forward with you. He disputed your opinion and maintained his own, in a free and easy way which astonished me; who always addressed my father as Sir, and uncovered in his presence. After dinner, your son took the easy chair instead of leaving it to his mother; and placed himself in front of the fire, leaving his sister to warm her pretty little feet as she best might.

Other faults are catalogued; and the father confesses, as we all must allow, that his son is a lout.

A debate follows on politeness generally; and the marquis defines it to be according to circumstances, urbanity, affability, courtesy, deference, or respect: he says that though it may be a small matter, yet he must be allowed to regret its disappearance.

“I should regret it as you do, Monsieur le Marquis, but for the heavy price it costs.

“What price?

“The price of sincerity. Come, can you deny that there was much base coin in this current politeness? was the courtesy more than skin deep, and were not the attentions mere deception?

“No! there was no deception. There was a little exaggeration: I confess that a 200 franc courtesy was worth only ten; but there was no hypocrisy, because no one was duped: the tender was not in base money; at the most it was in assignats.

“But we republicans, Monsieur le Marquis, have learned to distrust assignats. Leave us our fundamental virtue, truth. If the charm of the *ancien régime* was politeness, the duty of democracy is sincerity.— Besides, there are two kinds of politeness, the aristocratic and the democratic.

“What’s that? democratic politeness? a new combination of words!

“One is very superior to the other.

“That I am convinced of.

“Yes! Democratic politeness is the best.

“How?

“Is the best, at any rate in principle; inasmuch as reality surpasses appearance.

“Prove this, I beg.

.

“Penetrate into the little and proud hearts which always exist, and you will hear this kind of soliloquy. ‘Heavens! how well bred I am! With what grace and urbanity have I addressed this tradesman! How kind of me!’

“Not bad! not bad!” said the Marquis, laughing in his own despite.

“And your vassals, whom you treated as rustics! And your servants whom you treated as rascals! And your tradesmen whom you treated as scamps! And the people whom you treated as a mob! And the citizens whom you treated as—these fellows!

And all the shades of contempt, which alongside your politeness, had a certain flourish of impertinence.

“He! He! impertinence,” replied the Marquis, comically; “my dear sir, do not abuse impertinence, which is the privilege of a few, and is one of the most delicate products of civilization. A man must be well bred to be impertinent in season. So,” added he gaily, “democracy may be insolent, and is so, but I defy it to be impertinent.”

This abridged conversation convinces me, that M. Legouv  , while he sees the offensive side of democratic manners, has no hostility to the principles of '89. If therefore, I discover in his remarks about the peasants, sentiments unfavourable to the present *morcellement*, I exonerate him from the charge of desiring a return to the *ancien r  gime*; and I accept him as an unprejudiced guide.

I now pass on to M. Legouv  's two last essays; of which one is styled, “A village King Lear.”

We are told first that there is in rural districts generally, a want of sensibility. The author has seen many country funerals, with some mourners sad but none despairing. Death has no terror for them: what have they to regret, and what to fear? Can another life be sadder than they have found this?

A priest visited an old man who was very ill: he pressed him to repent and make confession. “What am I to confess, M. le Cur  ? I have suffered many wrongs and committed none.”—“Come, come, Father Patroclus, during your eighty years of life, you must have done something to offend the good God.”—“I indeed, offend the good God! It is he

who has done certain things towards me—however, we will say nothing about that: I shall soon see him: let us forget all that.”

As it is with deaths and funerals, so it is with love and marriages: the sentiment of love is unknown.

During illness, there is great care, but no tenderness. A husband was on his deathbed. The wife said to him: “do you understand the doctor? He orders you Malaga wine at five francs a bottle: if that would cure you, have it by all means; but since you can’t get well—— “What?” said the dying man, “wine at five francs! do nothing so silly! keep it for the little one.”

This sentiment of love for the little one, is not wanting: it is the only deep feeling left. Conjugal love is an instinct; friendship is a habit; but parental affection remains profound and lively as ever.

Unhappily, this affection does not command its just reward: filial love is faint, and reverence is fainter: you may hear a youth of eighteen address his mother as Marianne.

But there is worse behind: there is filial ingratitude; and the narrator gives an illustration, which I abridge.

“Yesterday, the first of December, the proprietor of the Château de la Grange, admitted the poor of the parish according to custom to pick up and cut the dead wood in the forest of Rougeot. The sight of the old people staggering under their loads, is always a painful one. I happened this day to walk in the direction of the wood; and on the verge of it I found an old man bending over his stick while he

took breath. As I passed, he said in a shamefaced manner: Monsieur, could you give me a pinch of snuff?—I don't carry snuff, my good friend, but here are some coppers to buy it with.—Thank you, Monsieur, but I am not a beggar.—I was touched by the man's simple emotion, and I hastened to ask pardon.—There is no offence, Monsieur.—As he prepared to move on, I helped to replace his faggot, and I walked by his side down the slope.—Don't be hurt at my offer, I resumed; I was thinking how fond you countrypeople are of snuff.—Yes, Monsieur, it makes a man forget. So does wine: so does brandy, for that matter (said he sorrowfully) but it is not for everyone to get drunk: some feel disgusted and ashamed.—A just remark, my friend, and unusual.—I never got drunk (said he earnestly). It is too expensive; besides it ruins a man. But a paper of snuff costs only a halfpenny, and comforts one for a day.

As we turned a corner, we met a tall, fair young woman, who cried out—now then, father!—Here I am (said he timidly). I had just time to ask his name.—Boyer, Monsieur.—He went away.

To satisfy my curiosity, I called on my neighbour, the mayor, and after relating the incident, asked about the old man.—You are lucky (said the mayor), for this case is just to your purpose in studying fathers and children of the present century.—True, I am greatly interested in that matter.—Very well, study old Boyer: study his life; it will enlighten you on a most interesting point.—What's that?

You must have observed how eagerly the children of to-day are bent on their father's inheritance during

his lifetime: I mean on succeeding him as a manufacturer or as a merchant or as a professional man, as soon as they are of legal age. The motto of most sons is the vulgar phrase, so terrible in its vulgarity—‘out of my way.’—My father was a notary; I served as his clerk till I was forty. My son, at twenty-five, forced me, as our sons know how, to give him my profession. My brother-in-law had a large business; his son induced him, against his wishes, to give him a partnership for three years, with a covenant to retire in his favour at the end of that time. These three years proved disastrous; and as the father lost £6,000, he proposed to recoup himself by remaining in the concern three years longer.—‘Business is business;’ (said the son) ‘we agreed for three years, and I insist on the contract.’ Such are sons at present: they climb into our seat, and once there, they reverse our plans, they efface all trace of us, they refuse our advice; above all, they forget our favours and return benefits with ingratitude.

But in the country, the usurpation is more violent and absolute: it is a usurpation of the land, a surrender of property during life. Formerly, as fewer peasants by far possessed land, the cases of surrender were fewer. The respect attendant on the title of head of the family, both in a man’s own eyes and in those of others, removed the temptation to submit to the humiliation of surrender, and restrained the sons from requiring it. Now, the fathers are richer and the sons are harsher: the fathers are feebler and the sons are more importunate.

The history of old Boyer will teach you what are

our present domestic morals.—Who is old Boyer?—Old Boyer is an example of a hearty, kindly, sober, narrow-minded peasant. He lived to labour. The quantity of work done in sixty-eight years of life, by this little, lean, shrivelled man, makes one shudder. He was always ready for the hardest tasks. He was noted in the country, as the strongest of mowers, as the most vigorous of reapers, as the most indefatigable of ploughmen, as the most thorough of vinedressers, as the sharpest of woodmen. Violent labour exhausts a man but pays him; and old Boyer acquired by the sweat of his brow, two or three acres of arable land, a small vineyard, a nice coppice, the house he lives in, and some money in the savings' bank. The way he built his house was characteristic. For two or three years, he used his holidays and his spare hours, in trundling on to his land in a wheelbarrow, pieces of millstone and wood, tiles, odd doors or casements bought cheap; and when he had heaped up enough, he got the building done with no cost but that for wages.

I told you that his only passion was for work; but I had forgotten his affection for his little one. Left a widower with a son of five years old, he was both father and mother to him. As soon as the child could bear the fatigue, he took him out to his work. You have perhaps noticed that in the early winter the ploughman in the fields, or the digger on the common, has usually a little companion. Round him, round his spade, flutters incessantly, or hops from twig to twig, a robin twittering with joy. Nothing more gently sociable; he seems bent on delighting the labourer. He follows as if he loved

him ; trusting himself even under the spade, to peck from the clods the worms he feeds on. Well ; Boyer's infant was his redbreast. During the hay-harvest, there he always was, trotting behind his father's great scythe. Sometimes in a winter fall of timber, I have met with them both at a mealtime ; father and child covered with the same cloak, eating the same loaf, drinking at the same bottle, with their feet resting on the same log : in the evening the father returned to the village, carrying his two trophies, the son on his head and the axe over his shoulder : or on a Sunday, seated before his door, with an old black hat on his head (his only luxury), when he dandled his little lad on his knees and smiled, happiness cast on this rough face a ray of beauty.—

Your old Boyer touches me, I replied ; he is simple and genuine. But the son : what is become of the son ? I am uneasy, for your words suggest some painful drama.—

You are right. Perhaps, Shakespeare's terrible drama. The son is the husband of the tall young woman you met. On the wedding day, the father divided his property ; giving his son the money in the savings-bank, and the house ; reserving however, the best room for himself, and keeping the land, the vineyard, and the coppice. I was at the wedding, and I never saw a gayer one : perhaps I was the only anxious guest. I am not satisfied with the youth : only one fault maybe, but one that includes every vice : he is weak. The daughter-in-law is disagreeable. She laughs, labours, and shouts ; and seems to have one of those energetic but despotic

tempers whose very cordiality is only a means of command. I could not help saying to old Boyer before I left—you have made a mistake.—

In what, Monsieur le Maire?—

In giving your house to your son. Since you chose to live in common, you should have taken them to lodge with you, instead of becoming their lodger. I fear you have given yourself a rough taskmaster.—

My son! my master—

Not your son: if he were cut out for a master, I should not be afraid: but he is of the stuff which makes sheep, not rams. Good bye! God grant that I may be wrong.—I was not wrong—

My friend stopped, as if it was painful to go on. But (said I) what could happen to the old man? Since he had prudently retained his land, he was independent of his children.

This was fortunate and unfortunate (said the Mayor): for it was about this very property that began the secret and bitter quarrel which still goes on.

The daughter-in-law was unfit for a country life. Brought up in a little neighbouring town, she had some knowledge of business and a taste for it: a year after marriage she turned her husband's ready money into a horse and cart, and frequented the markets to deal in poultry and cattle. By ill luck or mismanagement she got on badly, and in three months the money was gone. Another woman would have repented and stopped. She, like a true gambler, said to herself—it is money that I want, for with that I would turn silver into gold. Thus she began to covet old Boyer's property. But this

property was the old man's life. He had not so much earned it as conquered it: conquered it inch by inch, ear by ear, vine by vine: conquered it from the very soil. When he had bought the ground, it was a common, and he had cleared it: his other land was a mass of boulders, and he unaided had turned it into a vineyard. It was more than his property, it was his work. Beaten by age and sixty years' toil, he could no longer labour, but he could employ labour and see it: he only lived to watch his land, as he had lived to fertilize it. How then could he be brought to surrender it? how induced to give up talking of my meadow, or my field; to give up making his own wine, bringing home his own harvest, reaping his own corn?

These obstacles, as always happens, irritated Marianne's desires instead of extinguishing them. One day she came into his room, and at once cried out, in a voice half scolding half maternal;—this can't go on: you have no more pity for your poor body than for an old spade: I can't bear to see you killing yourself with your labourers; you are mad to meddle with the work: the other day you got a cold which lasted a fortnight: one of these mornings you will be carried in with a broken arm or leg, and we shall have nothing but vexation: I can't let you give me such anxiety, my old father: you must really give over your property to your son.

Give my property! (said the old man, terrified).

But who asks you to give it? (said she affectionately) the last thing we should wish. I say

give it over, for a nice little rent. (And as the old man was going to say something) It must go to him some day I suppose: you don't mean to disinherit him, do you? (added she laughing).

Of course not, but

But what? the land will be yours just the same, you will go on managing it. My husband knows your value too well as farmer, vinedresser, and woodsman, not to take your advice in everthing. You will lose nothing but the trouble and labour, and you will have the pleasure of seeing your land well worked.

What! well worked! (said the old man piqued) does my son think himself a better farmer than I am?

If it was yourself, old father, certainly not: but it is not yourself; it is a parcel of lazy strangers who are getting your land out of condition. I know that you are there to direct them; but I must tell you that you have not the eyes and legs you had, to look after these fellows. You lie in bed two hours later: you can't get as far as the wood more than once a day. I don't complain: by all means spare yourself and prolong your life; that is all we ask: but those drones take advantage of you and are ruining the property. Tell me now; how many casks of wine did you get formerly?

Eight or ten.

And how many, the last two years? Three?

That's true.

Formerly we reaped six bags of corn, and this year scarcely four.

After more bullying and coaxing, with an allusion

happily thrown in about a grandchild, the old man yielded. Four days afterwards, Boyer, his son and daughter-in-law, with two witnesses, appeared before a notary; to declare that the old man surrendered all his property to his son, on condition that for his lifetime he should be boarded and lodged, besides receiving a money payment of £16 a year. The price was a fair one, for the wife had not haggled.

The notary before receiving the signatures, asked the old man three times, whether he clearly understood what he was doing. Seeing some hesitation and sign of regret, he said:

Reflect carefully: there is time enough: in another minute it will be too late: are you quite decided?

The old man turned his hat in his hands, and bent his head. The son looked vacant: the wife said:

Heavens! decided! pray Sir, do you suppose we have forced him to come? It is he who has teased us to come: is it not father? The thing is simple: he does it from affection for his son.

Then the old man looked up, and the notary again asked, are you decided?—Yes! (said the old man) I am.

The notary then said to the son and his wife:

Understand what the law is: *every donation may be revoked if the provisions are not carried out, or in case of ingratitude.* You understand, father Boyer; *if the provisions are not carried out, or in case of ingratitude, every donation may be revoked.* The wife replied, laughing:—don't be afraid Sir, that law does not touch us.

In a quarter of an hour the deed was signed; in

an hour old Boyer returned home with his children ; but he returned in the new and fatal character of their creditor.

The result was shown in the beginning of this melancholy history ; when the author met with the old man stopping to take breath as he staggered under his load of firewood, asking timidly for a pinch of snuff, and trembling at the imperious voice of the village Goneril.

IV.

IN itself, this fancy sketch proves nothing : no one doubts that many old men are weak and that some daughters-in-law are cruel : Lear was not a peasant proprietor, yet his own daughters turned him out of doors, and exposed his white head to the forked lightning.

But in the next essay, M. Legouv  discusses the general topic of filial ingratitude among the French peasants. He sets out with saying that poor Boyer's case really represents that of thousands of old men. He asserts that though the peasants who have an old father do not all drive him to the poor-box ; that though many, through pride, forbid him to accept public aid ; yet they leave him in such rags as to provoke private alms : that though they do not refuse him a share of their soup, yet they give him the thinnest part, with the worst place at table : that though they do not lodge him in the brewhouse, yet they put him in the smallest and darkest bedroom : that they grudge him a pair of stockings, and deny him a pennyworth of snuff, while they

dress their daughters in silk gowns: that they do not refuse the annuity they owe him, but filch it bit by bit, and compel him to have recourse to a magistrate: that though they do not drive him to suicide, yet they poison his life with coarse reproaches; and that though they do not openly speak of him as 'the old gentleman who lives on,' yet they continually reckon up his days.

The author admits that there are numerous exceptions: he has seen touching examples of kindness; fathers well and affectionately treated, even though they were annuitants: but he asserts that ill treatment is so general as to be a public scandal.

He asks whether the evil is incurable. Is filial ingratitude to be henceforth an endemic plague of the rural districts? Must we deem it the wretched but inevitable consequence of the new principles which regulate family life? If so, those principles are condemned.

The evil however, (he says) is not a consequence of those principles, but of their tardy and incomplete development.

Formerly, peasant fathers however poor, and though they had surrendered their property, were protected against filial impiety by laws and manners taken together. They had for defenders, not only religious sentiments, but the civil power, the judicial power, and the social power; that is, the clergyman, the mayor, the king's advocate, the country gentry. The peasants were accessible to influence and to fear. They knew too well the unlimited character of authority, not to tremble and crouch before the threat of a magistrate.

At present the country people know perfectly the limits of the law: there is no alarming them with the word justice. As to rich or considerable people, the peasant is shy of them: he envies their wealth: their kindnesses hurt his pride. A sentiment which is only half blameable, since it springs from an independence of mind, leads him to resist their remonstrances rather than be influenced by them. In short, former manners are shaken or overthrown.

How is the evil to be corrected? By the development of new morals. Democracy has found its principles, but it is still in search of its morals.

The next sentence is striking, as bearing directly on the subject of peasant proprietorship. We are not now discussing economical results, but moral results. M. Legouvé's statement in that respect is distinctly unfavourable, as we shall see: he says that the morals of the country are inferior to those of the towns.

"Democratic morals have sprung up only partially, and that in the towns. We must introduce them into the country.

"On the ruins of our former society, and in many cases with those ruins, we must found a new society, and the artisans may serve as teachers of the peasants.

"I one day asked a contractor whether the artisan neglects his father as the peasant does; whether he ill treats him as the peasant does; whether he drives him to the poor box as the peasant does.

"*"A carpenter (said he), or a joiner, behave with harshness or ingratitude towards his father? he would be kicked out of his guild.'*

"There, if anywhere, is the remedy. The artisan

belongs to a guild: he lives in society: he lives under the eyes of others. He is surrounded on all sides by the great modern fact, which is our hope and safety: association. Now as soon as any class associates, its morality rises.

“Every association has a reserved fund; there is saving: it has a benefit society; there is charity: it has elections; there is reward: it has a power of control; there is blame: it has its flag; there is honour.

“Every member feels a responsibility for himself and for all his fellows. In living with others, we learn to live for others as well as for ourselves.

“But this community of existence is wanting to the peasant: he is a solitary animal: he works alone; he rests alone; he walks alone; and if he can read, he reads alone. He lives *for* himself only, because he lives *with* himself only. Would you raise him from his demoralization, plunge him into a community. I meet with innovators who would suppress the influence of the clergy, and even the clergy themselves: for my part I would give the clergy as many curates as there are good men within reach. Instead of shutting up the church, which is the great temple of meeting, and of communion (most admirable of words), I would attach to the parsonage, not only a school and an almshouse, but also a popular library, a popular lecture hall, and a benefit society: everything which unites and enlightens.”

M. Legouv   concludes that association and education, in other words the development of democratic manners and addiction to a democratic life, are the means of reconstituting domestic virtues among the rural class.

V.

I WILL recapitulate what I have written.

In an earlier part of this essay, I mentioned that as a manufacturer, I had my doubts about the merits of peasant proprietorship: because, while I heard from my friends, and learnt from books, that this organization made the little owners singularly industrious and frugal, I feared that these qualities might be pushed into vices: I suspected that the peasants might become careless of all pursuits but their business, indifferent to public affairs, deaf to the calls of charity; penurious, mean, and harsh; bent on getting and saving at whatever cost.

I assigned as grounds for my apprehension, that I saw among artisans, (persons of a similar rank) a certain number of self-denying and saving men, whose course of life I could not approve; since I found them sacrificing the real well-being of themselves and their families, to the one object of heaping up wealth: that I saw among the middle classes examples of the same sordidness, with results which appeared to me simply odious.

I had long wished to know whether such vices prevailed among peasant proprietors. I had in fact, found one observer declaring that there did prevail among the young French peasants, an undissembled and indecent impatience to inherit their father's goods. I had met lately with a more elaborate account of the present state of affairs: I had found M. Legouv  , in his *Fathers and Children*, drawing a careful picture of domestic relations among the

peasantry : to this view, unfavourable to the existing order, I was disposed to attach importance, because the author had shown elsewhere that he had not written for a political purpose, and that he was favourable to the democratic principles of '89.

M. Legouv  tells us that the peasants generally want sensibility ; a characteristic however, which is found among ignorant people everywhere : he says that in one respect nevertheless, there is little to desire, I mean in parental love ; but that unfortunately, there is no reciprocal affection, and no reverence, on the part of children, who commonly tease and coax their fathers into giving up their property during their lifetime, and into making themselves dependent on an annuity, which is paid grudgingly, and filched back again.

These opinions are illustrated by the case of old Boyer, who by unremitting labour and self-denial has acquired a few acres of land and a house, but has improvidently "put off his shoes before he was going to bed." M. Legouv  afterwards declares that old Boyer is only a type of a large class ; and that old men are constantly ill treated by their children to whom they have surrendered their property : he believes that town artisans are far better in this respect, and that if they behaved as peasants do to their parents, they would be sent to Coventry by their fellows : he attributes the peasants' sordid and churlish habits to the isolation of their life ; and the only cure he can suggest is to get them to associate together for other occupations and amusements.

Now there is much in this essay which should

give us pause, before we do anything to introduce among the Irish such a system as this vaunted peasant proprietorship. The "magic of property" indeed ! Strange and black magic that, which isolates a man from his fellows, which devotes him soul and body to the pursuit of gain, which dries up all filial reverence and pity for his father's white hairs, which drags him down far below the level of the ordinary town artisan !

Crying as are the faults of the Irish, I do not hear it said that they are wanting in filial affection. Indeed the reverse is generally believed to be true : their friends point with exultation to the remittances from America after the famine-exodus : and it is remarkable that the stream continues to flow ; for we find that last year more than half a million sterling was sent, and two-fifths of that sum in passage tickets, entailing further burdens in assistance to the emigrants hereafter. Should we, by peasant proprietorship, run the risk of drying up these affections ? Ought we to press forward an organization which would isolate these men, and reduce them to the cold and hard state of the French peasant ?

Again, I hear some of my friends declaiming against the English rural organization, as oppressive to the labourer : they grudge the landlord his rent, and the farmer his profit ; they would like to see rent and profit and wages, all in the hands of one man, the tiller of the soil. Now, if they look calmly at the French peasant proprietor, they may learn to doubt whether the combination of the three characters in one man, does produce the good results they

had imagined : they may suspect that our association of men is better than the French isolation.

I know that many of our farm labourers are ill fed ; but I find that the French peasant proprietor is no better fed : I know that our labourers are ill clothed and ill lodged ; I have no reason to think that the peasant proprietors are better clothed, and I believe that many of them are worse housed. If the French standard of comfort were high, it would show itself in the condition of the mere labourer ; whereas the rate of wages in France is lower than even in Wiltshire. Our rate of farm wages too, is in several counties comparatively high, and there is a decided tendency to a rise in the worst paid counties : there is no tendency that I know of, to an improvement in the condition of the peasant proprietors, except so far as they get a better market for their smaller productions through the spread of railroads. Our labourers have far better prospects before them than the French proprietors have : they have less anxiety in mature life, and a much less dismal prospect in old age. As a friend to Ireland I would far rather see an extension there of the English organization, than the introduction of small freeholds.

In conclusion, I will appeal to the French authorities. In the *Journal des Économistes* I find the following passage. “ The persons employed in small farming, make up for the inferiority of hand labour by *excessive work*, by extreme sobriety, and by rigid economy. The women take an active part in field labour : the house is neglected. The only food in general, consists of bread, vegetables, poor cheese,

and fruit. When the vinedresser is advanced in age, his frame is bent with labour, and his face is furrowed with wrinkles ; but he is proud of his independence and of being able to drink some wine."

There is nothing flattering in this picture of excessive work, penurious expenditure, women labouring in the fields, an untidy household, a diet without fresh meat or even bacon, and in old age the pride of independence and sour wine.

But what says Louis Blanc, the enthusiastic friend of the oppressed, the organizer of labour, the socialistic regenerator of France.

"The excessive division of the land, will bring us back, if we are not on our guard, to the former territorial domains. It is useless to deny it: the *morcellement* of the soil means small farming, that is the spade instead of the plough, that is routine in the place of science. The *morcellement* of the soil drives away from agriculture, both machinery and capital. Without machinery there is no progress: without capital there are no cattle. How then can small undertakings resist the tendency of competition to absorb them?"

"Every small proprietor is a day labourer. His own master two days a week, he is his neighbour's serf the rest of his time. The more he adds to his land the more is he a serf. This is how it happens: a man who owns a few miserable acres of land, which cultivated by himself, bring him in at the most four per cent., seizes the first opportunity of rounding off his estate. He accomplishes this by borrowing the purchase money at ten or fifteen or twenty per cent.: for in the country, if credit is

scarce, usury abounds. The result is obvious. Thirteen milliards, (more than five hundred millions sterling) are about the amount of the debts charged on the land. Thus, by the side of certain financiers who make themselves the masters of town industries, there are certain usurers who make themselves masters of the soil."

Think you that Irish Celts would do better than French Celts?

PART II.

VI.

IF we decide that peasant proprietorship is unfitted for the regeneration of Ireland, to what organization shall we look?

Let us compare the case of England, by recollecting through what changes she has passed. Slavery has always been unknown among us: even serfdom, or villenage, disappeared at an early date in our history. Afterwards, as it seems, the large estates were farmed by the owners, through the agency of bailiffs. Then, for a short time, there prevailed the system of *métayers*: cultivators who were called *coloni partiarii*; because while the owner furnished land and some capital, and the cultivator furnished labour and some capital, the produce was partitioned between the owner and the cultivator: instead of a bailiff on wages, there was a *métayer*, who had a personal interest in good management, because part of what was produced belonged to himself. This system has so long disappeared from

England, that it has left no vernacular name, as Adam Smith tells us; though in his time, that is a hundred years ago, it was not extinct in Scotland; where the name given to these cultivators was 'steel-bow-tenants.'

We learn from Professor Rogers's valuable History, founded mainly on the college rolls, that the Great Plague brought about a vast change in English farming. Even before the Plague, the colleges had let a good many of their estates instead of managing them by bailiffs; but as their tenants had not the necessary capital, they supplied these tenants with capital just as under the steel-bow system: the colleges however, did not take half or any other fraction of the produce, but took a rent for both land and capital. The Plague, by its frightful ravages, so reduced the population as to make labour scarce; and this gave to industrious people the opportunity of commanding high remuneration for their services, just as happens at present in new colonies. It is not surprising therefore, that this land-and-capital tenancy was short-lived; and that at the end of fifty years the tenants were able to find their own capital. From that day farms have been let just as they are now.

In aftertimes no doubt, a large number of yeomen owned the ground they tilled; though at what period these freeholders came into existence I do not know. At the much later period of the revolution of 1688, as Macaulay tells us, a majority of the farmers were in this condition.

At present the majority of the farmers are not owners of their farms: if we put our trust in the Census of 1861, there are several times as many

farmers as landowners; the farmers being set down as 250,000, and the proprietors as little more than 30,000; making eight farmers to one landowner.

The stated number of farmers may be pretty nearly accurate: the stated number of landowners is certainly far from the truth; and it is so on the face of the return, since it gives more women proprietors than men. It is unquestionable that landed proprietors are for the most part men; and as we may believe that the women so set down are accurately classed, it follows that the greater number of the men have been overlooked. The explanation of the omissions I believe to be this; that a man is classed in the Census according to his principal occupation: I, a manufacturer, though I may own a farm, appear as a manufacturer; you, a physician, though you may have inherited an estate and still possess it, appear as a physician. But the number of traders who are also landowners is very large: many professional men also, invest their savings in land, and this is especially true of lawyers. Thousands upon thousands of men drop in this way out of the category of landowners although they possess estates: but women who are landowners in their own right, being very seldom engaged in any occupation, would nearly all appear in the column of proprietors.

We may therefore, believe the Census to be innocent of gross lying, when it tells us that the female landed proprietors amount to 15,635. But we must accuse it of aggravated mendacity when it asks us to believe that the male landed proprietors amount to only 15,131.

What is the real number of both sexes together I can only conjecture; and in statistics, conjecture is a blind guide. Mr. Disraeli on one occasion called the number a quarter of a million: M. Léonce de Lavergne lately estimated it at 200,000; a number which would make the male proprietors twelve times as numerous as the female (assuming that the Census is correct as to the female).

I have heard and read a good deal of declamation about the iniquity of the land-laws; by which, it is said, estates are accumulated in a few hands: if these denunciations were confined to the condemnation of the law of primogeniture in cases of intestacy, I should regard them as so manifestly just as to be almost out of the reach of discussion; but since they are extended to the condemnation of all the laws which regulate the descent of land, it may be useful to inquire what are the results as shown by the size and value of estates generally.

If we accept M. de Lavergne's estimate of 200,000 owners, and if we regard these owners as each representing one with another a family of five persons, we have a million persons, directly or indirectly, landed proprietors; or, at the date of the Census, one twentieth of the whole population of England and Wales. As the middle and upper classes together, do not, probably, amount to nearly a fifth of the population, we should find that of the middle and upper classes taken together one family in four was possessed of land. This result may perhaps suggest a doubt as to the accuracy of M. de Lavergne's statement.

If we revert to the Census, which sets down the men as about 15,000 and the women as rather more,

or both sexes together as about 30,000; and if we take the annual rental at 45 millions £; it follows that on the average each man and woman has £1,500 a year, or a principal of £40,000 to £50,000: if we call the number of owners 200,000, each would have only £225 a year, or a principal of £6,000 to £7,000: but as there are many large estates, and still more of a considerable size, there must also be many far below the average value, that is below £1,500 a year on the one supposition, and £225 a year on the other.

Again, as to the size of the properties. Taking 24 millions of acres as the area of English and Welsh cultivated land, 30,000 proprietors would have on the average 800 acres apiece; the higher estimate of 200,000 proprietors would give on the average 120 acres apiece: again recollecting the prevalence of large and considerable estates, we see that the 800 acres, or the 120 acres, must be greatly reduced in the case of a large number of owners.

On the question what is the number of owners, I express no opinion; my studies of facts and figures, having rendered me deaf to Conjectural Statistics: all I say is that as there are nearly 16,000 female landowners, there must be very far more than 16,000 male landowners, and very far more than 32,000 landowners of both sexes.

One conclusion I do arrive at: that the size and value of estates, one with another, are not such as to justify vehement denunciations of modern engrossing of land. When we compare our own case with that of Rome under the Empire, when a single patrician would have estates so large as to give employment

to thousands of slaves, the size of our landed properties seems comparatively modest.

Now let us see how it has happened that a farmer consents to live on the estate of another, instead of cultivating his own little patrimony: why he has sold this, and made himself dependent on a landlord.

I have long looked at this question with interested eyes, because my own progenitors were Worcester-shire freeholders, who from generation to generation cultivated their paternal acres; but who, a hundred years ago, sold the property, and with the proceeds established the son as a manufacturer in the neighbouring town of Birmingham. I am myself the eldest son of the eldest son who became the manufacturer; and if I may assume, what I certainly cannot prove, that under different circumstances he who is now writing would have come into existence, then the estate unsold would have devolved upon me; and I have missed the satisfaction of being a gentleman farmer on a very small scale. But much as I delight in a rural life, I cannot say that I lament what I have lost; since the lot of a small farmer does not appear to me an enviable one: and if to the eldest son there is nothing to regret, to the younger sons and the daughters there is great cause for rejoicing; since they have escaped from a position in which one of the family took everything, and find themselves in a position where all the members fare alike.

Suppose however, that my grandfather, instead of becoming a trader, had become a tenant farmer, and had applied the proceeds of the estate to the purchase of cattle and implements and seed. He would,

no doubt, have lost the gratification of feeling that the soil he trod on was his own: on the other hand, he would have enjoyed the advantages of conducting a farm on a large scale instead of a small one, and of being able to make some provision for all his children, instead of making over everything to his eldest son, while turning the others out to seek their fortunes.

Let us see what is the pecuniary advantage at the present day, if a small freeholder makes such a change. Take the case of a very small estate; one of 50 acres; and one which has escaped mortgage and family charges: say that the land is good enough, so well situated, and so much improved, as to justify a rent of £2 an acre, or £100 a year for the whole; and that a neighbouring landowner would give at least £3,000 for it: say further that £6 an acre would stock the farm indifferently.

The income-tax schedules, as arranged by Sir R. Peel in 1842, assess farmers' profits at half the rent; and on fair land such as is here supposed, farmed by the owner, this is probably a liberal estimate: the freeholder's income would therefore be . . .

50 acres at . . . (2 + 1) £ per acre = £150.

The price of the estate when sold would be, as I have assumed, £3,000; and as the farmer on selling, would withdraw his farming capital of £300, he would have at command £3,000 + £300 = £3,300. With this sum he could, as a tenant farmer, stock at least 500 acres of land such as we are dealing with; and as his rent would be £1,000, his profit would be £500. But his income as a freeholder-farmer was only £150. Therefore, he is better off after the change by £350.

That is, his income would grow more than three-fold by his change from freeholder to tenant.

Why this happens is easily seen. Land is eagerly desired by the rich: they will therefore give for it a greater price than for other property yielding the same income; for together with the land they get local importance, and a delightful sense of visible and palpable possession. These pleasures are superfluities which a poor man cannot afford, any more than he can afford a magnificent hunter. If such a horse has come by bequest, he may be unwilling to sell it; and much more natural is it to cling to a paternal farm: but a prudent man will place a competency and the well being of his family, above even so respectable a sentiment as attachment to an hereditary estate.

I will reverse my case, by supposing that I advise a successful tenant farmer to give up his holding and buy a little estate. Why? That he may cease to call anyone his master, and get rid of risks. And what income will he have?

Now, principal £3,300.

Then „ The same.

Now, income £500.

Then, „ £150.

The jolly farmer stares at me, and says of me afterwards, that I am one of those scholars who know as much about farming as farmers know of Hebrew. Master indeed! He will have his baker and his tax collector for his masters when he can't pay them out of his £3 a week to live on; and as for risk, the first bad season would make him mortgage his estate.

I am surprised to find grave and practised economists overlooking these considerations. Even the late Mr. Nassau Senior, a man imbued with the purest and hardest notions of political science, indulged in sentimental regrets at the diminution of small properties; blinding himself to the fact that the change inevitably accompanies the advance of society in wealth and intelligence: he might as well maunder over the disappearance of the fidelity and self-devotion which were formerly found among the Highland Clans.

I have assumed that the estate in question is free from mortgage, but in reality this is improbable: some progenitor, pressed by bad seasons, by a large family, or by improvident habits, will have raised £1,000 or £1,500 on the property; and the interest will reduce the income to a starving point: yet when the estate is sold, the proceeds, after paying off the mortgage, may be enough to stock a considerable farm.

It will be conceded that small estates must inevitably change hands from time to time; but it will be asked why they should not be bought by persons of moderate means; and why, on the contrary, they should be commonly bought by great landowners, who seem bent on possessing whole counties. If persons of moderate means are the buyers, the number of estates may remain unchanged, though the owners vary. I reply that in a great many instances it does happen that traders, and lawyers of both branches, do invest their savings in this way. On the other hand, a great landowner has a stronger motive than anyone else for buying parcels of land

contiguous to his own; and if during a minority money has accumulated, or if by unusual prudence of an owner the same thing has happened, a price will be given that puts competition out of the question. I heard of a case in which a young nobleman offered a small owner to fix the worth of his property by valuation, and to give three times that estimate: the owner, being engaged in a successful business, and valuing the estate as being that of his progenitors, declined to sell it at whatever price, and it is still held by his family. But if the property had been on sale, the nobleman would have had it. The regularly repeated settlements of large estates, generally protects them from division; and the pretty frequent purchases of small estates by the great owners, tends to lessen the number.

A friend well qualified to judge, tells me that in his opinion, these settlements, though they keep estates from changing hands, yet do not diminish the number of owners, but actually increase the number: because, if hereditary estates were offered for sale, they would be bought up by millionaires, who could not be prevented from engrossing a number of them. This will be esteemed a paradox: but I certainly have known several cases of successful traders, who have each of them bought many considerable estates; and this greed for land could not have been gratified if those properties had been in settlement. The absence of settlement has substituted one millionaire for several former owners.

In my previous calculations I may be thought to have put farming profits too high; I have not however, fixed the rate rashly, but after careful dis-

cussion with the accomplished friend I have mentioned above, who is a great land-agent. In reckoning the farmer's income, I have included what he earns by skill and by superintending his subordinates, as well as the whole of his profit on capital (not deducting 5 per cent. for interest on capital as is done before profit is reckoned): I have compared the whole income obtainable by owning and farming the small estate, with the whole income obtainable by selling the small estate and investing the proceeds in tenant farming. I have reason to believe that a tenant farmer, fairly situated, may earn an income equal to 15 per cent. on the moderate capital he employs.

I have thus, for the purpose of comparison, traced the progress of the tenure of land in England: I have noticed that, at an early period, slavery and even serfdom having disappeared, estates were cultivated by bailiffs and free labourers for the benefit of the landlord; the produce, in the case of College owners, being sold, and not consumed by the landlord himself in feeding a host of armed retainers: I have pointed out that afterwards, the bailiffs were turned into tenants, to whom the landlords supplied capital as well as land, charging a fixed rent for both: I have mentioned that the bailiff-tenants, in the course of half a century, had contrived to accumulate or borrow capital for themselves, and had succeeded in taking their farms just as they do now. We see therefore, that the existing practice may plead in its favour the experience of centuries.

I have added however, that in 1688, according to Macaulay, a majority of the farmers were also free-

holders; though it must not be concluded from this, without further investigation, that the greater part of *the land* was cultivated by freeholder-farmers, since it might turn out that the great estates were often let to great farmers, and that one great farmer might hold as much land as ten average freeholder-farmers. In a particular district you might have 10 tenant farmers holding together 5,000 acres and 50 freeholder-farmers holding together 2,500 acres: five times as many freeholders as tenants, but holding together only half as much land. All I state therefore, is that in 1688, according to Macaulay, farmers were for the most part freeholders: I do not state that in 1688, the land of England was for the most part cultivated by the owners.

I have inquired how it has come to pass that the freeholder-farmers have been mostly replaced by tenants, and how far the engrossing of land has gone. I have censured the credulity of those who, trusting the bare figures of the Census, have believed that the present landowners are about 30,000, and who have failed to remark that if the Census is to be taken without correction, a majority of landowners are women. I have quoted the statement of M. Léonce de Lavergne, that the number is about 200,000; though I have declined to commit myself to this or any other result of Conjectural Statistics: limiting myself to this opinion; that as the female landowners are probably about 15,000 or 16,000, the male landowners must be many times that number.

I have then calculated what must be the average area and the average rental of the estates; first on

the estimate of 30,000 owners, and secondly on the estimate of 200,000 owners. I find that on the former supposition, the average estate would consist of 800 cultivated acres, with a rental of £1,500, and that on the latter supposition, the average estate would consist of

120 cultivated acres, with a rental of £225.

Finally, I have expressed my surprise at finding political economists regretting the present English organization; which, as I have shown, is eminently favourable to the material well being of the farmer; who, while continuing a freeholder, contents himself with 3 per cent. when he might get 15 per cent., and condemns himself to pine on £100 or £150 a year, when he might flourish on £500 a year. I might have also asked these political economists, how it is they fail to appreciate this striking application of the division of labours, or distribution of employments: how it is they sigh over arrangements, under which the rich landlord satisfies himself with a low rate of interest supplemented by the pleasures of possession, while the industrious tenant gets a fair rate of profit and can provide for his family as well as for himself.

These considerations have led me to the belief, that our present organization, commenced centuries ago and growing from one generation to another, is well adapted to English life; and distributes the property of the country in such a way as to cause an abundant productiveness, while it secures the highest rate of remuneration to the industrious classes; who give up the pride of possession and receive the more important gifts of competence and comfort. The land-

lord takes 3 per cent., the farmer takes 15 per cent. The farmer, no doubt, works for his income, but so he did when he was owner as well as farmer.

The labourer however, say some, is crushed between the two millstones; between the landlord and the farmer. I answer that by the acknowledgment of all, the peasant proprietor of the Continent, as compared with our labourer, works harder, is worse fed and is as ill lodged. I may add that English farm wages even in the worst districts have risen in a century at least as much as the cost of living has risen; and in most districts far more than the cost of living has risen: while there is no reason but the ignorance and apathy of the men themselves, (ignorance and apathy soon to disappear) why wages should not rise still further, and to such a degree as will make our labourers the envy of the continental peasants. Schools, railroads, half-time Acts, will harass the farmer into adopting machinery, and will raise the labourer to the mental level of the mechanic, while leaving the labourer the preëminent advantages of out door labour and pure air.

“But look at the independence of the peasant, and contrast it with the serflike condition of our labourer.” I answer that in a previous Part of this essay I have shown what this boasted independence is: that I have appealed to a French writer, himself a democrat, who tells us that the peasant proprietors are narrow minded, intent only on gain, selfish, penurious, prematurely covetous of their hereditary acres, and cruelly negligent of their fathers’ old age. M. Legouv   adds that in moral excellence they are far below the town mechanics; and he attributes this

inferiority to that very independence which we are asked to admire. If, he says, a mechanic were to treat his old father after the peasant fashion, he would be sent to Coventry: but the peasant is so cut off from the world around him, he lives so entirely for himself, his son, and his minute property, that there is no public opinion, or even class opinion, to coerce him. *This may be called Independence, it is Isolation.*

I believe then, that our system of landlord, farmer, and tenant, while, in accordance with the law of division of labours, it seems the best distribution of employments, is also more favourable to the moral condition of the most numerous class, than is the system of peasant proprietors. Our better distribution of employments results of course in a higher productiveness, whether the gross or the net yield be taken. Mr. Caird has lately told us, as to the gross produce of wheat, that while the English average is 28 bushels an acre, the French is only 16: an astonishing inferiority in a country possessing every advantage of soil and climate.

VII.

IF peasant proprietorship and permanent settlement promise few advantages, what other organizations does the world offer for our consideration? In all these inquiries I set aside America, because its indefinite supply of unoccupied fertile land, takes it out of the category of settled countries. From Russia also I believe we can learn nothing; because of the industrial anarchy caused by the recent and incom-

plete emancipation of the serfs : a revolution which may take generations to compose, if we compare the case with that of Prussia, where, after Stein's far milder experiment, it required fifty years to restore agricultural prosperity.

France is the country of which we know most ; and her peasant proprietors have already engaged our attention, and have been dismissed as unworthy of imitation. But it would be a mistake to suppose that nearly all the land there is divided among small holders.

It would be equally erroneous to imagine the system to be of recent date. Arthur Young mentions that in certain provinces he found districts cut up into morsels, some of them so small as to be covered each by a single spreading tree. This was about the year 1789, Young having been all but present at the taking of the Bastille ; and the *morcellement* therefore, was not originated by the social earthquake then commencing, though it was extended by the consequent confiscation of noble estates, the secularization and sale of church property, the abolition of the old land-laws, and the substitution of the Code Napoléon, which compulsorily divided among the children the property of a deceased father. Indeed we know from Adam Smith that the greater part of France was otherwise cultivated : and he is one of the few authors whom we may implicitly trust ; especially in the present case, since he resided long in France with the young Duke of Buccleuch, and this for a considerable time away from Paris, by which means he saw with his own eyes what he tells us. He says that five-sixths of the land were farmed

by métayers : the landlord supplying the land, and all or part of the capital, and receiving in most cases half the produce instead of our rent and interest. Since the métayers occupied five-sixths, there was only one-sixth left for cultivators on other tenures, including peasant proprietors.

What proportion is now owned by peasants I cannot say ; but it is not such as to exclude extensive holdings of other kinds. In La Beauce for example, a district south of Paris, there are considerable estates held in the English fashion by tenant farmers ; and as we are told, with the satisfactory results of a productiveness far above that of France generally, and of wages much higher than the miserable 6s. a week of other departments. But a larger proportion is still held on the métayer system, *à moitié fruit* : it is even said that that system prevails through a third of France ; especially in the south-west and the centre, while in the north-west it is uncommon.

Peasant proprietorship is not peculiar to France, but is common in parts of Germany and elsewhere. Métayers also are numerous : indeed we are told that setting aside France and Russia, half of the remainder of the Continent is farmed by métayers.

That the system is ancient is no proof that it is bad : on the contrary, its long continuance proves it to have been suitable to the actual requirements of the population. That it has been unknown and nameless in England for centuries, is no proof that it is bad ; though the very high productiveness of English agriculture, raises a strong presumption in favour of the superiority of our organization ; espe-

cially since we find such a distribution of the produce as gives a larger income to landowners, farmers, and even labourers, than is enjoyed by the corresponding classes in other countries.

It seems however, that the *métayer* system is approved of under some circumstances. In the Netherlands, the province of Holland is still farmed in this way, and both the landlords and the tenants are reported to be contented. Another example is given by that eminent writer Sismondi, who was a bitter censor of the English system; having, as it seems, been misled by forming his opinions when this country was out of joint, through the long wars with Napoleon, followed by the fall of prices after 1815, and the deep agricultural distress which ensued. Sismondi, noticing the tranquillity and comparative happiness of Tuscany, and finding that the *métayer* system prevailed there, hastily concluded that that system caused the prosperity of the country. Far more recently, a learned friend of mine, when staying at Florence, had the same opinion propounded to him by a competent authority.

Very lately however, a writer of authority pronounces against the Tuscan farming; stating that the land is cut up into small lots; that though the soil is naturally fertile it actually produces little; that the peasant gets nothing so good as bread, but only beans, which he washes down with a remainder-wine called *acquarello*, probably from its marked predominance of water. These people may be contented, but they would be better described as resigned to destitution. How would such a practice suit the more manly English? the basis of whose greatness

is an eminently productive agriculture, that coaxes and compels the land to render its treasures, if not to the utmost, at any rate to a high degree.

Besides; let the *métayer* system be judged by what it has done in other countries. I have quoted Adam Smith, as saying that in his time the system prevailed over five-sixths of France. What sort of prosperity and content resulted, we may learn from the history of Maurepas, Calonne, and Necker; of the Notables and the States-General; of the capture of the Bastille, of the Septembrists, and the bloody doings of the guillotine.

These appalling incidents might indeed have occurred under any system of farming tenure; though there is a violent presumption against the prevalent system in an agricultural country, when we find the lower classes outside the towns, seizing opportunities of rising on the nobles, of ravaging and massacring, unrestrained by any middle class.

If we are curious to see the landowners and their dependents making their bargains and fulfilling them, we may satisfy ourselves by turning over the pages of Arthur Young, a writer quoted as trustworthy, not only by his own countrymen, but by such Frenchmen as De Tocqueville. Arthur Young, as an Englishman, may have been prejudiced against a foreign practice; and as a liberal (unperverted at that time by the doings of Danton and Marat and Robespierre) he may have been prepossessed against the customs of Old France: on the other hand, as a tenant farmer and an unsuccessful one, he painfully felt whatever evils grew out of the English customs of landlord and tenant; and as a man of a pliant and

candid intellect, he would have seen any obvious advantages presented to him.

Moreover, he gives us statements by which we may judge for ourselves: here is an example.

“*Métayers*. This is the tenure under which, perhaps, *seven-eighths* of the lands of France are held; it pervades almost every part of Sologne, Berry, &c. In Champagne there are many at tier franc, which is the third of the produce, but in general it is half. The landlord commonly finds half the cattle and half the seed; and the *métayer* finds labour, implements and taxes; but in some districts the landlord bears a share of these. Near Falaise, in Normandy, I found *métayers*, where they should least of all be looked for, on the farms which gentlemen keep in their own hands; the consequence there is every gentleman’s farm must be *precisely the worst cultivated* of all the neighbourhood: this disgraceful circumstance needs no comment. At Nangis in the Isle of France, I met with an agreement for the landlord to furnish live stock, implements, harness, and taxes; the *métayer* found labour and his own capitation tax:—the landlord repaired the house and gates; the *métayer* the windows:—the landlord provided seed the first year; the *métayer* the last; in the intervening years they supply half and half. Produce sold for money is divided. Butter and cheese used in the *métayer*’s family, to any amount, compounded for at 5s. a cow. In the Bourbonnois the landlord finds all sorts of live stock; yet the *métayer* sells, changes, buys, at his will; the steward keeping an account of these mutations, for the landlord has half the produce of sales, and pays half the

purchases. The tenant carts the landlord's half of the corn to the barn of the château, and comes again to take the straw."

What perplexity! what room for fraud on the part of the farmer, and corruption on the part of the steward! I do not wonder at Young's comment:—"the consequences of this absurd system are striking; land which in England would let at 10s., pays about 2s. 6d. for *both* land and live stock."

But this system still exists through a large part of France; and a recent writer has told us the present results as to the district of Périgord, in the south west, now included in the Department of Dordogne.

The condition of the métayers, says the writer, as to material well being, is fair: the principal food being like that of English labourers, good bread made of wheat flour, without mixture of oatmeal or potatoes. Indian corn is used for the fowls, and little buck-wheat is grown. Some rye is raised for the sake of the straw. Wine, which is one of the principal productions of Périgord, is found on every table; most of the métayers producing it for themselves, selling a little sometimes, but generally drinking the whole, as well as a *piquette*, which is to wine what our very small beer is to ale. Some pork is eaten, and especially in winter: also the flesh of numerous geese preserved in jars. There is this singularity in the diet: that neither butter nor even milk is ever tasted; the cows being used as draught cattle, instead of oxen and horses: and the peasant smiles contemptuously when he is told that in other districts milk is regarded as necessary.

The food then, of these métayers is about as good

as that of our Lincolnshire labourers, and far inferior to that of our burly farmers; who would look with contempt on the occasional pork and pickled geese, and would I fear call that *piquette* by the expressive name of rot-gut.

Moreover, these people are sunk in the depths of ignorance, and have not even a desire for instruction. Our farmers, like too many of their landlords, are no friends to the education of their labourers; but farmers as well as landlords desire instruction for their own sons. The Périgord métayers, pressed to send their little ones to school, are full of excuses: the roads are bad, the children are wanted in the fields, or they have no fit clothes: in short, education is undervalued or disliked. In some families consisting of grandfather, father, and children, not one will be found able to read.

Agriculture is in a backward state, and the métayers have no desire to improve it. The soil is ploughed and sown, in the primitive mode, with old fashioned implements. Advice is thrown away, civilly heard and forgotten.

Such was the métayer system in Arthur Young's days, and such it is now. It is interesting to find the matter turning up in a novel. Balzac is not often read for instruction, nor would he be recommended to the student of Political Economy; but incidentally the tenure of land finds its place. In his *Lys de la Vallée*, he enters into many details, after his usual fashion. The Châtelaine, who represents his favourite character of a suffering angel, has taken the management of the estate out of the hands of her diseased and morbid-minded husband.

Hitherto, the land has been cultivated by *métayers*; but the lady, oppressed by the inevitable details, makes great efforts to introduce our practice of landlord and tenant with a fixed rent. Balzac was not a reader of English, which indeed he did not understand; nor was he affected, as far as I know, by an *Anglomanie*: he treated the conversion of *métayers* into tenant farmers, as a change manifestly for the better and needing no apology.

I hardly imagine that the wildest innovator would propose to introduce the *métayer* practice into Ireland. What other systems then, do we find in countries where the fertile land is all occupied? In Russia till lately we found serfage very general, and even now it is far from being abolished. In Germany itself serfage was common at the beginning of the present century. No one thinks of reducing the lively Irish to this stagnant condition.

Both in Russia and Germany, in abolishing serfage, the governments, I believe, have constituted large numbers of peasant proprietors. I have assigned my reasons for believing that this system is unfit for Ireland. I have shown how even in England, a comparatively thrifty country, small estates have ceased to be held and cultivated by their owners: I have pointed out that a man can get only 3 per cent. by an investment in land, while he can get 15 per cent. by using the same money in farming. But the Irish peasant is poorer and more thriftless than the English small farmer: how then can we recommend to the destitute and improvident, a practice which has gradually died out among the comparatively easy and frugal?

It is conceded that the Irish are improvident : but this, it is said, is the result of their unfortunate circumstances : to cure the vice, confer on them the satisfaction and the responsibilities of property ; and like the continental peasants they will become industrious and prudent. That the continental peasants are industrious and frugal no one disputes : that they are on the whole prudent I do not dispute ; though a large deduction from their alleged wisdom must be made, for the acknowledged fact of the extravagant amount of mortgages with which their holdings are burdened. A great part of the money thus owing is, I believe, borrowed for the purpose of buying additional land : but I am convinced that an Irish peasant would find many excellent pretexts for mortgaging, besides the passion for further possession. The French peasant is of an unfruitful race, little blessed or troubled with a numerous offspring : the Irish peasant has a fruitfulness such as would earn the congratulations of the Psalmist.

Peasant proprietorship has *grown up* in France : it existed a century, or centuries ago : it grew after the revolution, and is rooted in the soil. It is now proposed to introduce it *suddenly* into Ireland. To make it succeed, there must be an equally sudden change in the habits of the people. It is hard to believe that this sudden change would take place. We can judge of its probability by recollecting what does happen when the same peasants are placed under circumstances entirely new, with a perfect freedom from old associations, and with the greatest opportunities of worldly success : we know that in the United States, the crowds of Irish immigrants retain their native

peculiarities, and do not become the prudent, self-restrained people, which they must needs become to be successful proprietors. A sudden and radical change is not to be hoped for; no! not even under the magic influence of property: and without a sudden and radical change the peasant properties would not survive the first generation.

I have besides, expressed an opinion, founded on the statements of French democratic thinkers, that peasant proprietorship in its full vigour, is in one important respect highly objectionable: that it makes men over-fond of getting and saving; that it renders them narrow, selfish, grasping, negligent of filial piety, indifferent to the good opinion of their neighbours; with a frugality that runs into penuriousness, and an independence that ends in isolation. We may well shrink from the prospect of the open hearted and kindly Irish turned into cold, niggardly, money-grubbers. I do not believe that the change is possible: I am quite sure that if it were possible it would be hateful. An "heroic remedy" indeed, which would convert a generous nation into a nation of misers!

One other organization has been suggested: that of tenants in perpetuity at a fixed rent: the equivalent of that which is known in Bengal as the "Permanent Settlement." This measure of Lord Cornwallis has led to singular differences of opinion: it has been extolled by some as a great example of political wisdom; it has been condemned by others as a shortsighted sacrifice of future wealth to present tranquillity. Lord Cornwallis will still be esteemed a great and good Governor, even though this measure

should fall into discredit: and I think it tolerably certain that such will be its fate; and that the remonstrances and protest of Sir Joseph Shore (Lord Teignmouth) will prove to have been well founded.

Let us suppose that a hundred years ago, the agricultural rents of England had been payable to government instead of to noblemen and country gentlemen: that the farmers of that time were dissatisfied because the amount of their rent was variable, and they themselves were thus at the mercy of capricious or corrupt assessors and collectors, who noted every improvement as an excuse for an increased demand. Say that to correct these evils, a statesman such as the second Pitt, a follower of Adam Smith and a great peace minister, had procured an Act to the effect that a fair rent for every farm should at once be fixed, and should not from that time be raised. This would have been a Permanent Settlement.

It is probable that a great immediate good would have been effected: that a change would have followed, such as that which was seen after the English commutation of tithes; and on a greater scale, in France, after the removal of the *taille*: that the farmers, who before the Settlement refused to improve their ground, knowing that increased produce meant a rise of rent, would now drain and fence and earnestly till their fields, secure of themselves enjoying the fruits of their industry.

We may imagine that the productiveness of farming, low before the Settlement, rose rapidly and reached by the present day, its actual comparatively high standard. Say that the aggregate rental from

being 20 millions £ rose to 45 millions £, giving a surplus of 25 millions £ to the tenants in chief. Who would these tenants in chief be? The lapse of time would have carried off the original holders, and perhaps their sons and grandsons: the land would have passed into the hands of other owners, some of them descendants, some of them buyers of the interests in the land. In some cases the tenants in chief might still farm the land: in most cases they would have let it to poorer persons and would live on the surplus rent; the annual 25 millions £ being an ample sum to maintain a large landed aristocracy. In short our position would be nearly what it now is, except that the landlords would have to pay to the Treasury, 20 millions £ as a Land-Tax.

We are told that in Bengal under the Permanent Settlement, this process has taken place: the original tenants in chief have long ago disappeared; their lands held at a fixed rent have passed into the possession of descendants or purchasers; these new owners are able to let the lands at rents far higher than those which they pay under the Settlement, and do in fact let them and live on the surplus rent.

We can easily see that the tenants in chief, now become Middlemen, have a strong interest in maintaining the public peace; and in supporting the British government, under which their title to the surplus rent is secure; whereas any native conquering power would probably seize the lands, or at any rate exact a larger portion of the whole rents. There must also be a tendency to foster improvements; because both the middlemen and their dependents are free from the paralysing dread of being oppressed

by government officials. The Settlement is manifestly favourable both to political quiet and to increased productiveness.

But if the Cornwallis Settlement was intended to be a measure for permanently raising the condition of the ryot-cultivators, it was ill planned; because it made no effectual provision for preventing the tenants in chief from subletting their lands on terms however oppressive. We are told that in fact the present ryots are squeezed by the middlemen to the utmost: that they live in the greatest poverty; and that inured to misery, they resign themselves to a mode of life in which the barest necessities fall to their share.

Apply this to Ireland: imagine the present cultivators made permanent tenants, subject to the payment of a fair, estimated rent. Probably, there would be much immediate satisfaction. But how long would it be before these tenants in chief began to sublet their lands to others? Where improvements followed the security given to the tenant, there might be room for two rents: where there were no improvements the rackrent would be exacted from the misery of the under-tenants.

A Permanent Settlement in Ireland would be a measure for the reestablishment of Middlemen; and as readers of Miss Edgeworth we know what Irish Middlemen are.

Again: it is notorious that an Irishman, unrestrained by landlord and agent, will inevitably grant a corner of his land to a son who wants to marry. At present the resource is emigration; but this would probably almost cease, and population would

grow as before, to be periodically thinned by famine and pestilence; renewing those frightful pictures of gaunt men, emaciated women and pining infants, which froze our blood twenty years ago. In conversation with a friend who is a considerable Irish landlord, I asked him what was to prevent the recurrence of these horrors; he replied that under the provisions of the Poor Law, every landowner is careful to prevent the settlement of unnecessary persons in a district, and that therefore the old multiplication of paupers is impossible. In one of Mr. Nassau Senior's diaries the same notion is presented in this form; that the use of a landlord is to keep down population. But remove the landlord, give the present tenant unchecked command over his holding, and the landlord becomes a mere unproductive consumer, with no duties to perform, and with no power to restrain undue growth of population.

An Irish Permanent Settlement then, might be politically useful: at first by satisfying the peasants; afterwards by creating a class of middlemen, enriched by rackrents, and having therefore strong motives for supporting the imperial government, and dreading a repeal of the union and the possible establishment of a Fenian republic, as changes pregnant with danger to their invidious incomes. But in the ultimate interests of the many such a Settlement would probably be injurious and even fatal; since it would raise up a class of rackrenters, enslaved to Middlemen by arrears of rent, dependent on the precarious potato crop, with no hope of rising above the low social level now existing, and exposed to an imminent danger of falling far below it.

Happily, Great Britain has long ceased, as the governing nation, to be content to purchase political peace at the expense of the social happiness of the subject race. We will bear with discontent, disaffection, ingratitude, insult, Fenianism, civil war itself; rather than for the sake of a treacherous repose, we will give over the Irish peasants a helpless prey to a new race of middlemen; rather than we will have at our doors a nation of white Bengalese ryots; rather than we will live in the dread of other Irish famines to haunt our dreams and poison our waking thoughts.

VIII.

CONCLUSION.

FROM these premisses I conclude, that the various remedies proposed furnish little hope of curing the deepseated diseases of Ireland. I by no means dispute the general opinion that some changes of law are required: I believe that tenant right may be beneficially adjusted and extended, and that probably the general law of landlord and tenant should be amended. I cannot willingly put in the same category and treat in the same legal fashion, the English tenant who enters on a farm in perfect condition, and who during his tenancy calls on his landlord to do all substantial repairs; and secondly, the Irish tenant who reclaims a piece of bog, and pays a rent for nothing but the permission to do this. Conceding so much, I still protest against the introduction of Peasant Proprietorship, and Perma-

nent Settlement, as organizations tending to social injury and moral corruption.

The Irish disease is, I fear, too deep and too chronic to be cured by "heroic remedies," or by any speedy remedies. As we learn from an excellent translation by Dr. Hodgson, the sagacious Count Cavour laid his finger on the morbid spot; and said truly, that there must needs be dissatisfaction in a country where Protestant Saxons possess the lands, and Roman Catholic Celts till them. The peasants may retort upon us what we have bitterly said of them; that we are to them aliens in blood, aliens in language, and aliens in religion. Vary your tenure as you please, and the incompatibility remains.

Though the Orange arrogance of a century ago has been much diluted; though the rollicking, claret-drinking, duelling landlords, have adopted the decent manners of other countries; though the squireen has lost his strong peaty flavour; yet there still remain the two hostile camps, consisting of Protestant landlords and Roman Catholic peasants. Nothing short of spoliation, confiscation, revolution; a French '89 or an American '61; will essentially alter these unhappy conditions. I leave it to others to preach civil war and bloodshed: my own peaceful pursuits, and my convictions formed by the teachings of history, make me prefer the ills we have to the uncertainties and horrors of heroic remedies.

Since then, none of the measures proposed commend themselves to my understanding; since I cannot see any way in which government can advantageously intervene, unless in such ordinary legislation as the amendment of tenant right and of

the power of distraining for rent; nothing appears to me to remain but to leave matters to their natural course; and to protect landlords and farmers and labourers in concluding their own bargains. If the working classes are so far advanced in industry and prudence as to fit them to be peasant proprietors or uncontrolled occupiers on rent, then they must be well able to take care of themselves in the far simpler affairs of taking a farm in the English fashion, or in hiring themselves to a farmer; and happily they have a resource always at hand in emigration, which can be now effected with a facility and certainty of success, quite unknown when there were no brothers or cousins to receive them in a foreign land. It is strange that this application of the non-interference principle, should be opposed mainly by the very men who, in the anti-corn-law agitation, proclaimed as the Magna Charta of industrious men the principle that Government should abstain from meddling with private affairs. If the relation of landlord and tenant were peculiar to Ireland; if it had not worked satisfactorily for hundreds of years in England; if it had not superseded the *métayer* system in some of the best cultivated parts of France; if it were not found in every fully peopled country; if it were inconsistent with the great and undisputed principle of the division of labours; there might be a specious argument in favour of interference. But since the organization of landlord and farmer and labourer, is found to produce the greatest productiveness and to furnish the highest material well being to all classes, while the inter-dependence which it produces, results in a higher moral condition than follows from the so-

called independence, but real isolation, attending the systems recommended; on what grounds can Irishmen rest a claim for the British legislature to interpose? and why should they desire to be set free from the economical laws of Europe?

I know how easy it is to sneer at one who believes in the system of his own country: how easy to represent him as the slave of a narrow patriotism: as an *Épicier* and a *Philistine*, who looks round the narrow circle of his own experience, and pronounces that whatever is, is right. It is not so easy, though it is quite as just, to sneer at those who are bent on earning a reputation for liberality by maintaining that whatever is, is wrong: who without anxiously balancing conflicting arguments, underrate or condemn the practices of their own country; and apply their understanding, not to a search after truth, but to a search after those considerations which will support a foregone conclusion. A man who writes to please himself, may safely try to steer his course between these extremes; and having laboured to work out the truth, may bear with equanimity the stock sarcasms of unthinking partisans.

Some persons, democrats like myself, persist in dangling before our eyes the example of the United States, where tenant-farming is almost unknown; where everyone can plant himself on an allotment, and in a few years, with the help of his family, become the unincumbered possessor of a competent estate. Such thinkers forget, what it is difficult to keep always in mind, that the existence of an indefinite expanse of fertile and unoccupied land, broadly distinguishes the American case from our own.

To correct that error, let it be imagined that in imitation of the recent Dutch scheme for reclaiming the Zuyder Zee from the ocean, sea-dykes were constructed from Cape Clear to the Land's End, and from Port Patrick to Carrickfergus: that the Irish Channel were thus converted into a lake; and that subsequently, this lake being drained were turned into fertile land. The conception of such a utopia, ought not to be difficult in an age when Manchester can carry on a conversation with San Francisco and Calcutta; and when it is proposed to give us the means of passing dryshod from Dover to Calais.

Disregarding other consequences, let us see what would be the probable result as to our farming arrangements; and how rent, profit, and wages would be affected. Young men looking out for farms, would rush to the Channel-Country, where for £100 they could have a good estate. They would offer high wages to labourers. The older farmers, threatened with the loss of their ploughmen and wagoners, would raise their wages; just as they now do if great towns grow up in their neighbourhood, and compel them to give 15s. or 17s. instead of 10s. or 12s. The landlords would soon feel the effects. At present, the suburban farmers recoup themselves the additional 5s. a week wages, by their facilities in finding customers and manure at their very doors: under the assumed change, the additional wages would have to come out of rent. Worse than this; the landlords, instead of having a score of applicants for a vacant farm, would find themselves with a score of farms waiting

for an applicant: and the rents would probably fall to such a rate as would pay a fair interest on buildings and improvements, together with a considerable addition for proximity to markets.

The actual condition of the United States is something like what I have sketched; with this addition, that the agriculturists, having grown up without the habit of paying rent, regard it with antipathy as something like a badge of servitude; and have in certain cases moved heaven and earth, even to the corrupting of their judiciary, in order to get rid of the rights of landlords. It is futile then, in the absence of my utopian Channel-Country, to compare Great Britain with America in the matter of rent and of the tenure of land.

Other publicists have long wistfully regarded peasant proprietorship as the model we ought to copy: I have tried to prove that whatever advantages may attach to it, there follows one irremediable disadvantage.

Among other alleged benefits is this: that the peasant proprietor, uniting in himself the characters of landlord, tenant, and labourer, lives in a condition of perfect independence. It is conceded that materially he fares worse than the British farmer, worse even than the best of the British labourers: but he has, it is said, the supreme advantage of working for himself alone, and is not exposed to the bullying and oppression of an employer, or to the hauteur of a landlord and the screwing of his agent. I have endeavoured to show that this so-called independence is really isolation; and issues in those unfavourable results which naturally ac-

company a condition of life in which there is no action of public opinion: I have copied from a liberal French author a sketch from the life, which represents peasant proprietors as narrow and niggardly; deficient, not only in public spirit, but even in filial gratitude; too proud indeed, to throw their aged parents on the parish, but so devoid of common humanity as openly to long for the succession secured to them by the law; and frequently, after wresting from their living father a concession of the land (a concession voluntary but far from spontaneous) treating the old man as a heavy incumbrance, as a worn-out and useless slave whom the law refuses to put out of the way.

Now, why should a particular class require this savage independence, or isolation, which is not possessed or claimed by others? The artisan is dependent upon his employer: if he joins a Benefit Society or a Trades' Union, he must do as the majority bid him; and as a member of a Coöperative Society he must submit to the varying laws of the body.

The manufacturer is not isolated; for he must labour to satisfy the wishes of the buyers. The merchant has his foreign correspondents whom he must humour, and entertain on their travels. The banker must treat his customers with attention, and beware of offending even those whom he invites into his sweating-room. The politician is dependent: in an absolute government, on the will and whim of his Prince; in a free government, on the enthusiasm or madness of the people.

Why should the cultivator alone escape the fate of

mankind? Why should we desire that he should escape it, and be cut off from that influence of his fellows, which if sometimes galling, is on the whole salutary and humanizing?

I do not deny that peasant proprietors are more prudent than our labourers; though it is open to question whether it is their condition which causes their prudence, or whether they continue to be proprietors because they are prudent. Their degree of prudence moreover, is sometimes exaggerated; since, as I find, both in France and Germany, during bad seasons, the hat is sent round among the public for their relief. Nor can I concede that they are so prudent as our farmers, if, as seems unquestionable, they have such an insatiable desire for land, as to lead them habitually to buy beyond their means, and to borrow for payment; and this to such an extent as now to be reckoned by milliards of francs, or hundreds of millions sterling.

I do not believe that the Irish peasants would rise to this pitch of improvidence: I make no doubt that they would have their mortgages, or failing these, their unsecured debts: these mortgages or debts however, would be contracted, not by purchasing more land, but by mismanagement of the old. Novelists may be pleased to turn a villain into a hero; to draw a line and say, thus far such a one was capable of every iniquity; suddenly he became virtuous and amiable: divines may convert their penitents into saints: but I cannot be persuaded that the manners and habits of a people can be reversed by the magic wand of any legislation however skilful. Teach the Irish prudence and leave them to get land.

Few persons would put back the almanack, and revert to the *métayer* system. It is true that an Italian statesman, not long ago, in conversation with an able legal friend of mine, pointed to Tuscany, and remarking on the satisfied condition of its rural population, recommended that Great Britain should adopt the *métayer* system, under which Tuscany was so happy. That Italian reasoned from too narrow an induction: he did not know that in France before '89, under the same system, which, as we have seen, prevailed over four-fifths or seven-eighths of the country, the rural population had fallen into the most miserable condition, and that during the revolution it joined in the grossest excesses: nor was he aware that at the present time it is under the same system that the worst cultivated and least prosperous districts of France are farmed. Tuscany proves, what has been proved elsewhere, that under conditions otherwise favourable, the *métayer* system is compatible with the moderate happiness of the agriculturist: France, both before '89 and lately, proves that the *métayer* system has no power to counteract the evils attending oppressive feudal rights, absentee landlords, and inconsiderate management of estates.

A Permanent Settlement finds more advocates. Some persons urge the British legislature to give up the land to the present tenants, reserving to the owners a fixed rent, guaranteed by the Government: leaving the owners, or almost compelling them, to quit their country houses and live altogether in Dublin, London, or Paris; to cease to employ resident agents; and altogether to abandon the respon-

sibilities and duties of landlords just as much as if their property consisted in Consols.

I do not deny that a Permanent Settlement may in a particular case be successful; just as the *métayer* system, just as any system, may be successful, when it grows naturally out of the circumstances of a country. I find it stated that a Permanent Settlement has given satisfaction in one little province of Holland.

But in India, on a much larger scale, and after trial during a great part of a century, the contrary result has followed: for though politically the government has gained the advantage of ranging on the side of order the large and powerful class of Middlemen, yet this strength has been purchased at the terrible price of destitution and misery to the actual cultivators. And just as in Bengal, the tenants in chief or Middlemen, have ground down the ryots by exacting from them the utmost possible rackrent; so in Ireland, the present tenants, once set free from landlord influence, would pinch and screw their poorer countrymen as Irish Middlemen have done before. Indeed the very name Middleman calls up in our minds a throng of odious associations.

I believe then on the whole, that we must not expect from Parliament, any thorough remedy for the chronic diseases attending the relations of Irish landlords and tenants; diseases which under the expectant system, the lapse of centuries may cure. Unfortunately, the landlords are to the tenants aliens in blood, heretics in religion; brethren neither for this world nor for the next. The curse of conquest adheres to the country. National hatreds have an

amazing vitality. Servia in the present century, degraded and unlettered, rose, and by a series of sacrifices threw off the Turkish yoke; urged to the task by traditions and legends smouldering in the country for a thousand years: Poland may yet avenge herself on Russia and the "orthodox" church: even in Wales, there survives after five hundred years, a dim desire for revenge on English oppressors.

In Ireland, the traditional hatred felt by dispossessed owners, is aggravated by more recent outrages during the rebellion of '98. Add the jealousies of a peasantry with few occupations besides agriculture: a peasantry intent on every movement of every landlord, whether Celt or Saxon, Catholic or Protestant: a peasantry that has a secret code of its own, maintained by midnight meetings, and enforced by threats and murders: a peasantry that grudges an acre of land thrown into an owner's domain, and hates all improvements, as disturbing the sluggish current of existence. Such evils are not to be corrected, such a chaotic condition is not to be harmonised, by votes of Lords and Commons. We and our posterity must resolve to wait and watch: to keep the peace between the hostile camps: to act justly and liberally: to be content with alleviation where immediate cure is unattainable.

Minor changes, I have said, are desirable: tenant right may probably be legalized and extended. The tenant who has turned a bog into a paddock, appears at least, to have a claim unknown to our farmers, who look to their landlords for all substantial improvements. In strict justice the peasant has no claim, if he has paid only a nominal rent for a term

of years, on condition of bringing the bog into cultivation. But illiterate men cannot understand strict justice: they are governed by their sympathies; and these are all in favour of the tenant who has created a valuable property for the landlord. The liberal owners take this into consideration, and know that strict justice is sometimes a shocking cruelty. A tenant right law should, if possible, restrain harsh and greedy owners from abusing their legal powers. It is no answer to say that the peasant improved the bog, knowing what might follow; just as it is no answer to say that a workman knew what might follow when he engaged to receive truck for wages, or when he sold his child during a famine: the law will have no such bargains; it forbids the payment of truck, it forbids the traffic in human beings: I wish it were possible by a tenant-right law to forbid such land-bargains as have the appearance of injustice.

Besides such cases, there are those numerous ones in which the tenant has made substantial improvements on a farm that was cultivated when he entered on it. An Englishman naturally asks why these improvements should not be effected by the landlord, as among ourselves: he is answered, that however desirable such a change, it is impossible to rapidly alter the habits of a country; that the landlord is unprovided with the capital, and the tenant would be jealous of his interference. A tenant-right therefore, is inevitable; and should, if possible, be regulated by law.

Such changes however, are regarded as trifles by certain heroic legislators; who would play with

laws abrogating the ordinary rights of property, as children play with firebrands.

These men ask, with that contempt which is characteristic of innovators tainted with socialism, what good we expect from the extension in Ireland, of a tenure of land which we only endure in England.

I answer that among other advantages we may expect a great augmentation in the produce, in that considerable portion of Ireland which is now cut up into small holdings. Even now the produce of the whole country is considerable as compared with that of France. Wheat is not the natural growth of so dripping a climate; but it appears that the average yield is no less than 24 bushels an acre, whilst that of France is only 16. No doubt, the English yield is as much as 28 bushels; besides that as potatoes are the national food, wheat is only grown under favourable circumstances, whereas France forces its growth of wheat to supply the bread which is its national food. But after making these allowances, the yield of 24 bushels shows the existence of a productive farming as far as wheat is in question.

But productive farming is the first necessity of well being: it is favourable to all classes; to the landlords, as tending to raise their rents; to the farmers, as favouring a fair rate of profit; to the labourers, as facilitating a good scale of wages and a kindly system of relief to the distressed. A rich country may give low wages; a poor country must give low wages: a rich country may half famish its destitute; a poor country must half famish its destitute.

In fully peopled countries, no other tenure of land, as far as I can see, gives such ample returns to agriculture, as the English practice of landlord, tenant, and labourer: on no other system is there so scientific an application of the principle of division of labours, or the distribution of employments; giving to the rich man in return for his investment in land, a low money profit supplemented by the pleasures of possession; giving to the capitalist farmer a far higher money remuneration than he would get as owner of his farm; giving to the labourer, when he has knowledge and resolution to insist on his rights, a far better maintenance, and a much higher tone of mind, than are found among the little landowners of the Continent.

No one proposes that we should go back to the *métayer* system. Peasant Proprietorship, if it could be established and maintained among a people untrained to prudence, and prolific in their families, means incessant labour, hard fare, a destitution of all public spirit, a so called independence which is really isolation, a penuriousness and hardness which would be worse than the present reckless but generous spirit. As to a Perpetual Settlement, that means in one word, the return of the hated Middlemen.

LIMITED DEMOCRACY.

I.

THE Conservative Reform Bill has set men thinking once more about the progress of democracy: especially has it aroused the attention of manufacturers, who like myself live among the democratic artisans. I need scarcely say that the Conservative Reform Bill differs greatly from what a Liberal Reform Bill would have been: that it goes down deeper into the labouring ranks, and throws up among the electors men whom the liberal party regard as scarcely ripe for the franchise. True statesmanship consists in adapting institutions to circumstances: Mr. Disraeli's Act appears to me, as an employer, to have overpassed the actual circumstances, and to have introduced into the electoral body numbers of men too much like the old scot and lot voters. Hitherto, the great manufacturing towns have been free from even the suspicion of bribery: it was lately said by the great London evening paper, that the Birmingham voters would no more think of selling their votes than of selling their wives: I am sorry to say that among the new voters I heard a whisper long before the first election, that a man's vote would sell for enough

to pay for the loss caused by the abolition of compounding.

Considered as an act of statesmanship then, the Conservative Reform Bill is a mistake : but regarded in the light of party politics, there is much to be said in its favour. A patriotic statesman would refuse to create a venal constituency : a party politician would inquire which side would profit by the venality. Now the great towns have a vast addition to their constituencies : many of the new voters will be open to bribery and other influences : the liberal party cannot profit by these additions because they had the towns at their disposal already ; the conservative party may profit by them, and with the help of the triple membership, may succeed in getting a share of the representation.

In favour of the Conservative statesmanship however, it may be contended that the wider the foundation the safer the superstructure ; that it is necessary for a pyramid to stand on its base : that unrestricted household suffrage with a sufficient residence for registration, would be the best of all arrangements, because it would bring all decent people within the pale ; instead of, as at present, having the population divided into the fit and the unfit, and raising a resentful, discontented, spirit, among the disqualified. It is undesirable I confess, that on the occasion of an election, the law should confer on the rich man a right which it refuses to the poor man : that the many should be allowed to meet and listen to the candidates' speeches, but should have no opportunity of recording their opinions. But for the danger of corruption, a danger

much reduced by the vastness of the new constituencies, the breadth of the Conservative Reform Bill, has much to be said in its favour.

It is a real advantage that when the question of "compounding" is once settled, there will be nothing left to fight for as to the extension of the franchise. On this ground, we may probably rejoice that no new ingenious inequalities were created. The case is different from one in which only a money interest is concerned: if a man who has a stake of £500 in a railway has one vote, it is just that another man with a stake of £20,000 should have several votes; and this *scale* voting was suggested as applicable to election contests. Another proposition was, that a man should be allowed to vote for as many buildings as he paid rates for; or at any rate, in every ward where his name appeared in the rate book: just as at present a man can vote in a borough for his factory, in the county for his house outside a borough, and in every county in which he has a freehold qualification: a concession which I fear, would have been made use of by some ardent politicians, to acquire a vote in every ward of a borough. If we can but secure good government; if we can set limits to democracy by the natural influence of tradition, of wealth, of beneficence, and of intelligence; we are far better without these visible and legal privileges conferred on the wealthier classes.

This however, is comparatively but a temporary matter; the question of a generation: below this there is the fact that democracy throughout the world, has advanced, is advancing, and apparently

will advance; threatening in its course to overturn all thrones and aristocracies.

Is this a fact to be rejoiced in or wept over? Have we reason to fear the tyranny of majorities, the oppression of the few by the many, the levelling of all superiority by the brute force of mediocrities, the construction throughout the civilized world of a dead level of fortune, of intellect, of morals? Or must we anticipate the repetition of what the world has often seen, the establishment of absolute governments on the ruins of these commonplace and envious democracies?

For myself, living among the men from whom such consequences are expected to issue, I am not haunted by any nightmare horrors. I do not anticipate a reign of envy and malevolence: I do not expect to see the many insisting that all taxes should be paid by the few, as though each of us was not just as much bound to pay for the government by which he benefits as for the bread which he eats: I do not look forward to a demand that a quart of ale should be sold at the price of a pint; nor to a denunciation of good houses and carriages for those who can afford to pay for them.

If we consider how this progress of democracy has come to pass, we shall probably be relieved of our fears.

I hear it said that this progress has come to pass during the last four hundred years, through the invention of printing, the discovery of America, the prevalence of Protestantism, with its reforming action even on the Roman Catholic Church.

During the last century it has certainly been much

advanced by the inventions of Watt and Crompton, by the adoption of steam navigation, and by the construction of railroads, which have taught the many what they never learnt from books, that their own place of abode is but a point on the world's surface. Above all, the improved school instruction which has been given, and will be given in fuller measure, enables all classes to think, to watch, and to combine.

Modern Democracy implies capacity on the part of the people: it implies advancement in knowledge, in self-culture, in civilization.

A Frenchman solves this problem in a more simple fashion. He says that democracy means only the adoption of the principles of '89: that it was that Revolution which taught Europe and the world, the rights of the people and the detestable character of aristocracies. An Englishman regards this explanation as defective: he hesitates to admire principles which were at first floated in seas of blood, and which after eighty years have only resulted in the production of government by one man, checked by the fear of further revolutions.

Nor are the Englishman's doubts much allayed by the views entertained in Russia, where there is a party which admires the present French government as the perfection of wisdom; which adopts as its symbol, a vast steppe or plain, with a lofty tower in its centre; which hails the emancipation of the serfs as a means of crushing the boyards; which would have equality and fraternity, and which translates liberty into government by one.

For myself, I am contented to learn in my own family what democracy is and what it can do: a

week's voyage conveys me across the Atlantic, and there I see a democratic experiment which has not broken down like the French, but has done, so far as the white race is concerned, exactly what it proposed to do: which has united law, order, and substantial justice, with liberty verging even on licence. It seems to me absurd to appeal to a French attempt which has failed, when I have before my eyes an English attempt which has succeeded.

During the last hundred years we have seen two great series of experiments: in the one series, national enthusiasm, eloquence, eager aspirations after unknown and impossible things, unchecked blackguardism, massacres and judicial murders, a whirlwind of wars, absolutism, crushing reverses, national disgrace, revolution upon revolution, ending in the government of one man, or the steppe and the tower: in the other series, beginning with the Stamp-Act, with Grenville and Burke and Chatham, we go on to a declaration of rights, armed resistance, a seven years' struggle to the death, victory and liberation, unexampled growth and prosperity, a greatness that threatens the world, a patriotic spirit like that of ancient Greece, a regular government, a general submission to law, an incomparable clemency towards vanquished rebels. Look upon this picture and upon that: this attracts, that repels me. It is not the principles originated in '89: it is the principles which conquered in '83, that reconcile me to democracy.

But granting that democracy is not so frightful a thing as it seemed to our fathers, whose memory associated it with French rowdyism and blood and

immeasurable wars; granting that the Americans have proved the English race capable of unchecked self-government; it may still be asked why we cannot be content to go on with our old constitution, which by the confession of European liberals, has conducted us to a greatness beyond all precedent in the old world. I reply that the question is not what we would do, but what we must do. We cannot stand still, however much we may desire it: we may pilot our vessel, but we are unable to resist the winds and currents which carry us on.

The same inquiry was made in 1830. Why are you discontented? You have got through the dark period which followed the wars with Napoleon: agriculture and trade are flourishing: taxation is no doubt heavy, but the government expenditure is reduced to the lowest point compatible with national safety. All this was true, yet the towns refused to be contented. Again, it was urged that we had an unprecedented greatness to satisfy our patriotism. This too was undeniable: for we reposed on the glories of the Peninsula and of Belgium; on Salamanca and Vittoria and Waterloo: France had not rallied from her exhaustion; the United States had not grown into gigantic proportions. But still the great towns insisted on their claims.

Looking back forty years, it seems to us absurd that any difficulty should have been made about giving members to Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and Sheffield, though indeed they were not half so predominant then as they are now.

I remember, not without trembling, the tumults of those days. I can testify to the truth of the

assertion, that we were not very far from resort to violence. Excitement was at its highest in Birmingham, where the Political Union had been already called into existence; not originally to promote parliamentary reform, but to constrain the government to relax the currency laws. Mr. Thomas Attwood, the founder and leader, was fortunately quite indisposed to have his head exhibited on Temple Bar, or even to undergo a patriotic imprisonment. He had begun life as a Tory; and when he was impertinently asked why he had veered round to radicalism, he replied with his unfailing good humour and his provincial accent, because sir, I found I could not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. Peel and the Tories were wedded to the bill of '19: he thought it worth while to try the Radicals. The year 1830 found the Political Union fully formed; a ready instrument for agitating in favour of the reform bill: in 1831, and till the Act of 1832 was passed, vast were the popular gatherings, and strong was the language used. Mr. Attwood was at the head of a monstrous organization that threatened to outgrow his control: if the habeas corpus had been suspended, he would certainly have been the first to be locked up. He exerted himself sincerely to prevent such a catastrophe.

An incident within my own knowledge, shows that there was danger of bloodshed. A highly respectable manufacturer, of a rather excitable temperament, but distinguished through life for unusual industry and devotion to business, was so eager for the carrying of the bill, and so enraged by the Tory opposition to it, that he resolved to take

part in any popular rising which might occur; and actually purchased firearms, not to protect himself against insurgent workmen, but with the intention of fighting in their company. The year before, all classes had been found at the Paris barricades: all classes, I imagine, would have joined in an English insurrection.

Happily, the bill was passed without violence. The Tories had a veteran soldier as their chief adviser; and veteran soldiers hate bloodshed: the Duke too, had seen on the Continent how fearful were the miseries of civil war. Being asked by a politician at an earlier period, I think about 1819, whether it would not be better to let the popular discontents come to a head that they might be put down by force, he peremptorily replied, no; for blood once shed would not be forgotten. It was not by such men as the Duke of Wellington that the "massacre of Peterloo" was perpetrated.

In 1832 then, a reform bill was inevitable, unless the Tories had been prepared to use violence; and that would have only postponed, and probably aggravated, the organic change. The bill did not create a democratic sentiment in the country; it only adapted the political institutions to the democratic sentiments existing.

Since 1832 further democratic progress had taken place, and further changes in our political institutions had become needful.

II.

SINCE then, democracy advances whether we desire it or detest it, let us see what it is, and how far our love or hatred is well founded.

The most characteristic feature of English and American political life, is the prevalence of self-government: this is what distinguishes our race from that of France or that of Germany. Now democracy with us means progress in self-government: it means the extension to the labouring classes of the powers once confined to the higher, and of late to the middle and higher classes. In France at present democracy signifies quite a different thing: it signifies the steppe and the tower: a perfect equality in submission to one man approved by the majority: a dead level of servitude, qualified by an occasional vote, or recurring revolution.

Is self-government then, so excellent a thing? I believe it is, to those who are fit for it. It is not an excellent thing to those who are untrained to use it: neither to emancipated blacks who have been sedulously kept uninstructed, and who must have fancied and real wrongs to avenge; nor to serfs lately set free from *corvée*, and unaccustomed to think and provide for themselves; nor even to Frenchmen, who for centuries have awaited instructions from Paris for the mending of a road or the repairs of a church steeple. But to men of English race, schooled to its use, self-government is worthy of the praises bestowed on it.

It is surely, the great preservative against the

anarchy which attends on revolution. The disorder and bloodshed of Paris after 1789, were no doubt owing in considerable measure to the incapacity of the king; who would not be a party to shedding blood even under the highest provocation; who in fact abdicated the powers of government in favour of the *canaille*, and surrendered the sword to the *sans-culottes*. But if the people generally had been accustomed to govern themselves, they would have interposed, and would have taken up the reins let fall by the king: they would have met together; would have insisted that the ministry should put the law in force; and failing this, would themselves have formed vigilance committees and would have administered Lynch law against malefactors and murderers. No one can conceive the September massacres taking place in Philadelphia or London.

It may be thought that Vigilance Committees and Lynch Law are themselves anarchical: I cannot deny that they have an anarchical flavour; but they are in fact means of repression exercised under intolerable provocation against violent men. I cannot admire that combination of circumstances, nor that laxity of administration, which gives a temporary predominance to the lawless; that robs a San Francisco or a New York of its right to orderly government; but such a crisis having arrived, it is well that peace loving citizens should meet together and assume the necessary powers.

Those Americans who have not been slaveowners, have no love for such extraordinary efforts, but are remarkable, unless in such an abnormal case as New York, for their submission to law; and not unnatu-

rally, when they remember that the law has been framed by their representatives. Men who are self-governed, respect the laws they make for themselves. It is generally admitted that there is more reverence for law in the United States than in Europe.

Democracy, or popular self-government, is less predominant in England; though it prevails vastly more than in the great continental countries. We find also great reverence for law and its administrators.

When the present police force was first established, there was a considerable popular dislike of the men; partly well founded, because they were inexperienced, meddling, a little puffed up with a newborn authority, and in many cases quite unfit for their posts. Yet even then we did not hear of much violent resistance; not even where sober and well conducted citizens were arrested on unfounded charges.

In a very few years, the artisans found the value of systematic protection, and learnt to resort to it. I lately saw two men trundling a handcart, when a cabman, driving too fine, startled the men, who swerved and struck the cart against the cab. One of the men fell on his back, but scrambling up half stunned, immediately shouted for a policeman. A white bear escaped from a show: it made its appearance in a field, and some men who were there, ran off for the police. It astonishes one to see an unarmed policeman walk into a turbulent crowd, with confidence that he will be treated with respect: now and then that confidence is misplaced; but those who have to do with the force know men who have been engaged through a long life and who are

not maimed or blinded. The head of a detective force said to me one day, that he had been carrying pistols for some weeks, because there were strangers about among the criminals: they might not know the officer's person in plain clothes, and *therefore* might attack him.

An Irishman would say that the reverse would be more probable; that the criminals would be more likely to attack him, if they did know him to be a policeman: he knows unfortunately that among his own countrymen the police are enemies.

An Irish gentleman, after visiting a great English town, related his astonishment at what he had seen. There was a long string of carriages before a concert hall: a nobleman's coachman, presuming on his importance, was cutting in to the ranks: the police seized his horses' heads, mounted the box and forced him to retire. All this was simple: but what astonished my friend was the behaviour of the crowd of onlookers; in Ireland the sympathy of such a crowd would have been with the coachman, but in England it was with the police, who were loudly applauded for keeping order.

Within the last two years, we have had an illustration of the difference between Englishmen and others. There was held at Geneva an international congress of workmen, to discuss the means of bettering their condition, by securing a larger share of the products of labour to the artisans. The favourite panacea among the English delegates was the universal adoption of trades' unions: this caused a mention of a late legal decision which was misunderstood to go so far as to deny to trades' unions all

legal protection against embezzlement. The foreign delegates ferociously denounced this, as another example of the iniquity of Capital in *exploiting* labour: the English delegates, who represented the sufferers, quietly replied that the state of the law (as misunderstood) was most unjust: but the business they should undertake would be to get the law amended.

This habitual submission to law and police, was misinterpreted twenty years ago. Before the Crimean war, the muscular Christian School, seeing robust men yielding like sheep to a policeman's baton, openly expressed their belief in the saying falsely attributed to Napoleon, that we were a mere shopkeeping nation. In that war we added nothing to our glories: relatively to the French we even lost that prestige which had remained to us since Waterloo; perhaps not unfortunately, if the French grudge and desire of revenge remaining since 1815, then lost their intensity. If indeed, we had seemed in the Crimea to have degenerated in courage, that would have been a great misfortune, because it would have invited attack, and would have instigated us to regain our reputation by further battles. But the thin red line was as firm at Alma as ever it had been: in the desperate mêlée at Inkermann, individual stubbornness was not wanting: in the charge of the six hundred, the thoughtless devilry of our cavalry was never surpassed: and though that ebullition of indiscipline broke through the rules of war, and disconcerted the schemes of the general, yet it left a wholesome conviction on the enemy's minds that the British cavalry were capable of

any feat however audacious. Add the better regulated charge of Scarlett's Brigade, which, as told in Kinglake's graphic and eloquent pages, it is impossible to read of without emotion: a charge which recalls the feats of Richard and the Crusaders; and the success of which seems to a civilian miraculous, until he learns that it was made possible by the Russian neglect of the maxim that Cavalry fight with the spur. The Muscular Christians happily found themselves in the wrong.

During the war, the talk among the bourgeois of Paris was that all the honours belonged to their own army: a mistaken patriotism such as is found in every nation and not least in the French. This however, has not led to any denial of our warlike powers. There was the same exaggerated patriotism fifty years earlier: yet Napoleon said that with the British infantry he could have conquered the world; and General Foy, in his Fragment, declared that at Waterloo that infantry showed a firmness so amazing that he could almost believe them to be trees rooted in the soil. Nor have the Crimean campaigns robbed us of this character: for a French general has lately declared it fortunate for the liberties of Europe, that the British infantry are so few. Scratch a Russian and you find a Tartar: scratch an Englishman and you find a soldier. The popular love of military display has disappeared: *chauvinism*, the soldier's contempt for a civilian, appears to us brutal: as Mr. Kinglake has well said, we are not a military, but a warlike people.

Soon after the Crimean war, the mutiny in India gave proof of the same warlike qualities. The

British in that country are a true aristocracy : not a mere oligarchy, reigning by the force of money and hiring forces for defence, but a class maintaining itself apart from its neighbours and above them, by its vigour of body and mind ; by a courage which seldom fails, and a pertinacity in bearing as well as doing. Brilliant as are the French in attack, it may well be doubted whether at such a crisis their individual self reliance and firmness would have been equal to the task imposed on our officers and men, when the native regiments turned like half tamed tigers on their masters, or left them, one European against a thousand, to confront the conquered races, which at the best would wait to see on which side victory attended. In no crisis of our history have we shown ourselves more worthy to command.

It is the same with the Americans : their talk is of the almighty dollar ; after Bull's Run, Europeans fancied them cowards : but after Grant's desperate and repeated and successful attacks on Richmond, we learn how dangerous they are as enemies. Stubborn courage and a readiness to confront death, are still characteristics of the race.

A reverence for legal authority then, on either side of the Atlantic, is not an effect of timidity but of manly submission : not a Chinese crouching to the bamboo, but a submission to just laws made by the nation ; to courts which enforce these laws ; and to agents who execute them for the general good.

It is a great matter to be able to say in behalf of democratic government, that it causes a cheerful respect for legal authority, while it strengthens the vigour and robustness of men's wills.

Another favourable characteristic is, that aristocratic morgue is checked. No doubt, men born to rank and fortune will everywhere imagine that the world is created for their special gratification: that it is divine destiny which makes the labouring classes work and weep, the middle classes pinch and save, while the nobles and gentry idly enjoy the fruits: those who inherit sixteen quarterings will still despise those who do not even know what quarterings are: even in free England neither law nor public opinion will prevent the county magnate from showing his superiority by receiving his neighbours at the hall, and declining to return their visits: nay even in democratic America, the *upper ten thousand* assume a predominance over the parvenus of yesterday; and Miss Martineau smiled sorrowfully on seeing a distinction between families which had made their fortunes, and families which had inherited theirs. But at any rate the English aristocratic follies are kept out of sight; and being unknown except to those who unwisely flaunt their newly made possessions in the eyes of the landed gentry, they cause little irritation to the public.

Notwithstanding this inevitable pride, there is much sympathy between all classes. In the last century, a good natured French nobleman driving through Paris, asked the cause of a jolt which he felt: he was told that a man had fallen under the wheel: *pauvre diable*, said he, and drove on. An English nobleman now, would not and dare not show such indifference. In the popular novels of a hundred years ago, in those of Fielding and Smollett for example, there is a tone of levity as to the

seductions and sufferings of hoppers, and game-keepers' families, which is startling to readers of Dickens.

Before 1789, England, with all its boasted regard for the liberty of the subject, was ferocious in its treatment of criminals, and shamefully careless as to persons committed for offences of which they were frequently innocent. The prisons of England in the time of Howard and long afterwards, were more disgracefully bad than those of some absolute governments: death was the punishment for horse-stealing and even for trifling robberies in a dwelling-house: nor did these punishments fail to be sometimes capriciously inflicted; as for example, in a case which afflicted the morbidly humane Romilly, where a criminal simulated insanity, and the judge boasted that seeing through the trick, he *therefore* left the man for execution.

But the revolution of 1789, though it Toryfied England, fairly frightened the governing class, and prepared it for needful changes. The United States, peopled with our emigrants, speaking our language, in constant communication with our merchants, acted powerfully upon us; causing a political nausea among our aristocracy, but a democratic tone among our middle classes; and furnishing an example of prosperity and content, constantly appealed to before our reform bill, and until state repudiation had called down Sydney Smith's indignation upon the drabcoated men of Pennsylvania. These examples, of anarchy on one side, and orderly republicanism on the other, loudly called on our aristocratic government to set its affairs in order. Organic

alterations must be resisted: but administrative reforms might be effected, and would constitute the best apology for the existing constitution: the only hope of staving off electoral changes, lay in making the government work well.

Canning, Huskisson, Peel, were all of them great administrative reformers, though opposed to alterations in the constitution of Parliament: they would stand aloof from the odious Holy Alliance, and openly sympathize with the revolted Spanish colonies; they would consolidate the law and amend the jury system; establish a police force; rein up the power of the slaveowners and insist on gentle and liberal treatment of the negroes; introduce the principle of free trade so far as the landed interest would permit; do everything that was possible without disturbing the balance of the constitution. Could they but have kept the manufacturing towns from growing, could they but have dwarfed Manchester and Birmingham, Leeds and Sheffield, Glasgow and Dundee, they might perhaps have maintained the aristocratic government which had prevailed since the Revolution. At any rate in making these efforts, they did many things excellent in themselves: they showed a hearty desire to promote the welfare and to raise the character of all classes; and they actually adopted towards the unfortunate and the criminal a gentle and even tender tone, which has almost endeared the highest classes to the lowest, and which has at least mitigated that envy which is naturally felt by the poor towards the rich and noble. It is not in England but in Russia that an angry man calls his enemy an aristocrat.

The progress of democracy below, has greatly lessened the hauteur above.

It is more difficult to measure the effects produced on the classes below the highest. Among the middle classes in great towns, there is more self-government than there was formerly. It is scarcely conceivable that thirty years ago, Manchester and Birmingham had no municipal government; nothing but Commissioners appointed by Special Acts, and Bailiffs remaining from manorial times: no Mayor or Councillors, no Magistrates, no quarter sessions; nothing in the way of administration of justice which they could call their own. In Parliament, till nearly that time, they had no representatives: but for any local business must go humbly to the county members, who by the tradition of an aristocratic nation, regarded traders as men of an inferior grade. We have not outgrown these traditions, but we have learnt to protest against them.

Go into any of the towns I have mentioned, and ask about the public buildings: you will find them nearly all the work of a generation. True, those towns thirty years ago were only half as populous as they are now; but even then they had attained a surprising magnitude, and such as would have amazed Horace Walpole, who when they were only a tenth of their present size, boasted of them as worthy to be the capitals of other kingdoms. The growth of Town Halls and Courts, of Gaols and Lunatic Asylums, of Schools and Colleges, indicates a public spirit among the citizens: the Town Councils indeed, who have mainly erected them, are not in good odour with fashionable people, who

feel towards them as towards democratic America; but the Town Councils, backed by the ratepayers, have shown a liberality in their outlay, which was impossible for self-elected Commissioners or close corporations, and which is not practised by the administrators of county rates. Among the town middle classes, public spirit has grown with the spread of democratic institutions.

It is not easy to estimate the progress of the working men. Mr. Baines in his speeches, urging on an unwilling House of Commons a former extension of the franchise, which looks like a conservative scheme by the side of Mr. Disraeli's, gave a cloud of facts to prove that a great advance had been accomplished. From my own experience, I can say that I believe Mr. Baines to be correct: but where changes take place gradually, they are almost imperceptible to one who lives among them. I find it extremely difficult to prove the truth of my opinion by recalling the former state of things and comparing it with the present: still I am convinced that drinking has much diminished, for I remember that in the last generation it was a common thing for a mechanic to go off on a spree for days or weeks, whereas now such an offence is not tolerated in a respectable factory: I see that the younger men are cleaner in their persons and more civilized in their manners than their fathers were. I find also, that they not merely tolerate, but welcome the Factory Act, as a means of shortening the excessive hours of labour among women and children; and that they have learned to be thoroughly in earnest as to the promotion of education.

I can appeal with great confidence to the verdict of one of our most distinguished official promoters of schools. He was familiar with Birmingham before the days of the Reform Bill, when the old leaven of the radicalism of Hunt and 1819, still fermented in working men's minds; when a good coat was held to indicate an antagonist, if not an enemy; when there was no regular police to hinder dog-fighting in the precincts of the town. A stay of some weeks lately made him familiar with the present condition of affairs; and he was gratified to find obvious and indisputable proofs of advance. An Oxford education, a long residence in official London, at a distance from manufactures and artisans, must have developed his fastidiousness, and made the outward crust of manufacturing dirt more offensive than it was to him as a boy: yet he was struck with the visible progress.

I assert therefore, that the development of democracy has been accompanied with an improvement in the working classes: I have shown before that the middle and upper classes have advanced at the same time.

III.

I DO not deny however, that democracy has evils attending it.

There is some truth in the assertion, that a democratic spirit is often the result of an envious disposition. The odious vice of envy is undoubtedly very general, and makes many persons unhappy when they see their neighbours more prosperous than themselves. I have heard an educated man declare,

that every honour conferred on his neighbour is an injury done to himself: such a disposition, carried out to its consequences, would make the bestowal of titles or other honorary rewards, impossible: Lord Nelson, after all his heroic services, would have died an admiral, just as any sailor who had never seen service: the Duke of Wellington, notwithstanding his long years of unfailing devotion to duty, and his amazing and unbroken successes accomplished with small means, would have not been distinguished from any carpet soldier whom favour had promoted without requiring him to be once under fire. Honour, "the cheap defence of nations," would be like virtue, its own reward. A democratic spirit carried to this length, is unfavourable to public spirit and chivalrous self-devotion.

In France there arises from time to time, a cry for liberty, equality, fraternity: the attempt to carry the popular madness into practice, has hitherto ended in the government by a Napoleon; and this one man has restored the regime of titles and decorations. The desire of equality however, holds its ground in the law as to the disposition of property at death; depriving a man of the control of half or three quarters of his fortune, and dividing these portions equally among his children. When the evils of the consequent subdivision of land are pointed out, the usual reply is, not that those evils are imaginary, but that it is worth while to endure them, for the sake of maintaining the equality shadowed out in '89. Great landed estates are of course very rare: but the fewness of children in most families, and as M. Dupont White shows, the

mercenary character of marriages, which unite rich wives to rich husbands, cause together a far larger accumulation of property than we should have expected to find. Notwithstanding the spirit of equality, Paris has nothing of the appearance of a severely democratic capital: its magnificent houses, gorgeous equipages, grand entertainments, sumptuous dress, glittering diamonds, and unblushing demi-monde, are worthy of any absolute monarchy.

Envy, as far as we see, is not particularly busy with these displays; and indeed among the poorer classes, there is generally an admiration for free handed expenditure. But in another direction, envy is rife. French working men are to a lamentable degree jealous of the rights of capital; overlooking the fact that if labour first produces commodities, it is self-denial which abstains from using them, and accumulates them into capital; and that this self-denial, which benefits all classes, is just as much entitled to the natural reward attending possession, as labour is entitled to the wages it earns. Such bitterness towards capitalists is a most unhappy result of the desire of democratic equality.

America however, is to us the most interesting and instructive example: sprung from the same progenitors, speaking the same language, nourished with the same literature, obeying the same Common Law, professing the same religion.

In the United States, we find much that is great and good, but much that is distasteful. It would be unfair to lay to the charge of democracy, many of the peculiarities of private life: the devotion to

money getting, the absence of refined homes, the vulgar curiosity, the perpetual expectoration: all these are characteristics of a new and prosperous country, where every man has the opportunity of earning an independence, and few, in the want of good servants, can enjoy the comforts of a well regulated household.

But some features of public life are harsh and offensive: the mass meetings pass resolutions which are irritating to other nations; and the Lower House too faithfully reflects these follies. In the Trent affair, if the executive had lent itself to popular madness, there must have been war with England: a war wantonly provoked, and probably fatal to the accomplishment of southern subjugation. Popular folly would have disappointed popular desire. It may be objected that in fact the war did not take place, and that as for more than half a century, not a shot has been fired in any dispute between America and Europe, we must pronounce the United States government taken altogether, to be a peaceable one. If it be peaceable, it is certainly undignified: I should be sorry to see our House of Commons passing strong resolutions condemning our neighbours, and then quietly shelving the question at issue.

But the most acknowledged characteristic is the tyranny of the majority. It is conceded that England has in this respect far more liberty. In America a popular speaker is expected to praise the enlightenment of the masses, to bow to their decision, to abuse the stupidity of effete Europeans: he would be a bold man if in any considerable as-

semblage he decried democratic institutions, and recommended the adoption of a different form of government. Born citizens are desirous of limiting the too facile acquisition of naturalization: they dare not form a public organization for the promotion of this object. On each Fourth of July, when men vie with each other in the invention of new extravagances for exalting the constitution, a fresh impetus is given to the narrowing and levelling process of self-laudation, and to the hatred of all who would dare to tell the sovereign people of their imperfections.

The Americans did a wonderful feat, when they showed by example, with how little central administration the English race could exist and prosper: but in the eighty years which have since elapsed, I cannot find that any further progress in the art of government has followed. Indeed, in some respects, a deterioration has taken place, through the gradual development of unseen defects. Thus, Old Hickory set the example, since unhappily followed, of dismissing on his accession, all the paid servants, down even to the prison warders and letter carriers: a fatal blow to honest and effective administration, as may be seen in the late report of the Prison Commissioners, who have found that under this system the warders are frequently drunken, swearing rowdies, put to manage prisoners because they have performed dirty election services.

Among ourselves, such a gross abuse would not be allowed to happen twice: and if the progress of democracy be likely to inflict on us such evils, it must be regarded as a fearful misfortune.

In the freedom of the press again, we certainly stand on the higher ground. There, as here, the law permits the publication of anything not contrary to public morals. But there, another check exists, of which we are ignorant: an editor who would venture to attack king mob, should keep himself ready for disguise and flight, unless he has a taste for tar and feathers.

Are these evils inseparable from democracy? If they are, let all educated men band together and resist its progress.

With regard to the appointment of judges also, we have a great superiority: for it must be acknowledged that the world never possessed a bench of higher judicial qualities than our own; whereas that of the United States has been surpassed. Our judges have learning, industry, integrity, and independence. Being appointed for life, they have little to expect from the crown; and since 1760, when George III renounced for his successors the right of reappointment on accession to the throne, the judges have been entirely independent of the heir apparent.

In the United States, the judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President, and for life. Formerly, the judges in each state were appointed by the Governor: gradually, the people have deprived the Governor of this privilege, and have themselves elected the judges for a term of years. An American tells me that in fact this change has been innocent; not because the present practice is good, but because the former practice worked badly, and in this way: when a governor was to be

chosen, each party among the electors made a list of persons whom they desired to have appointed to the offices of the state, including those of judges; and they required the candidate of their party to promise that he would adopt this list: what is now done openly, was then done secretly.

However this may be, the present arrangements rob the judges of that serene dignity which attaches to them in England. You visit America and find a certain lawyer sitting on the bench: at a second visit you find the same man employed in the Customs. There is also far more than a loss of dignity: there is a danger of undue influence; for a judge whose term of office is about to expire, may have before him a case in which one of the parties is an influential elector. When the rents of certain proprietors were in question, what could be more unjust than that the people who opposed the rents should elect the judge who had to decide the right to them?

Democracy in the United States then, is attended with many and considerable evils. It certainly gives to the multitude a higher satisfaction, and a greater activity in public life, more thorough submission to law, and a more universal patriotism, than are found in European countries. But there are on the other hand the disadvantages of a want of political progress, caused by the gross flattery of stump orators and a consequent inflated conceit among the people; a tyranny of majorities, making impossible the free expression of unpopular but wholesome opinions; an impossibility of good administration, especially since the days of Andrew

Jackson, who set the wretched example of displacing every public servant and of substituting election tools, however ignorant and debauched; an interference with the due course of justice, through the prevalence of the custom of appointing the judges by popular election.

In short, the will of the people is too unconstrained: the many, instead of sufficiently deputing their powers to competent persons, insist on doing too much for themselves: a strange contrast to France, which still calls itself a democracy; and in which the people choose by universal suffrage, one man with powers limited by no constitution; one man restrained alone by the fear of another revolution.

In the United States in short, *democracy is unlimited.*

To me it seems that this is the source of the many political evils which prevail there: that it is not democracy, but unlimited democracy which causes them.

And what form of government, unlimited, is free from great evils? Is it monarchy? Is it aristocracy?

As to absolute monarchy, we do not know by experience what it is; since our insular position, by long rendering a standing army unnecessary, left the crown dependent on the subject for supplying such force as was wanted; and consequently, the great barons, instead of being annihilated, were only toned down into a peaceful aristocracy, much bled and reduced by the civil wars of the roses, but still strong enough to act as mediators between crown and people. Since the time of Fortescue, limited

monarchy has been our boast, and it still exists in forms of administration.

No Englishman will deny that in other European countries, unlimited monarchy has produced greater evils than those prevalent in the United States: that Charles V and his wicked son crushed Spanish liberties like ours, and by finally establishing the Inquisition, produced a priestly domination and a torpor of lay intellect which may be felt for many generations yet to come: that Louis XIV is answerable for giving an unhappy predominance to the Roman Catholic faith, by means too frightful to be dwelt on; and that he drove out of his kingdom the most ingenious and industrious of his subjects, with the result of removing to England many of the most flourishing manufactures, and of aggravating that poverty which his extravagant wars had previously caused.

Are the evils of unlimited democracy as seen in America, at all to be compared with those of unlimited monarchy in Spain and France?

With unlimited aristocracy we are in modern times little familiar: but the term carries our minds to the case of Venice. Now, if we are to believe what we are told of that republic, the traditional maxims and practices of its administration were detestable: the aim was the safety of the state by whatever means; by treachery, by unjust imprisonment, by the stiletto of the bravo; by applying to practice Charles V's odious dictum, that none should reign but those who would sacrifice their conscience to their policy. An aristocracy, under any circumstances, is singularly constant: an un-

limited aristocracy is incapable of growth or improvement.

Are the evils of unlimited democracy in the United States, any thing like so intense as those which afflicted Venice? And as to the good which attends it, what was there in Venice even worthy of mention in a comparison?

Granting then, that the United States have many gross faults which need correction, I maintain that these do not spring from the democratic form of the government, but from its unlimited character; from the absence of checks and restraints.

IV.

BEFORE I ask what lesson Great Britain has to learn, I should like to answer a question which has haunted me, and may have haunted others.

The late John Austin published in the year 1859, a pamphlet maintaining that so called Parliamentary Reform, would really be Parliamentary Damage: that in short, any alteration in the electoral body, would be a change for the worse.

Now Mr. Austin possessed an intellect unsurpassed in his day for force and subtlety: he belonged to the school of Jeremy Bentham and the philosophical radicals: any opinion of such a man on a topic within his competency, must weigh heavily with all modest liberals. Age, no doubt, would have tamed his youthful ardour: but there is here more than an abatement of vigour; there is an application of the old vigour to the support of a thesis contradicting his early opinions. The change cannot be attributed

to the enervating influence of riches, nor to the blandishments of power; for his fortune was moderate, and he did not haunt the antechambers of ministers.

There are men who are able to satisfy their understandings, without any reference to the authority of those who advance an argument: I am more diffident; I fear to disagree with such a man as Mr. Austin, without inquiring how his opinion may be accounted for.

The most remarkable feature in Mr. Austin's character, as it seems to me, was his sensitiveness. There is an indication of something like morbidness, in speaking, as he does in his lectures, of "the present wretched condition of human society." But the sensitiveness I have mentioned produced other results much more unfortunate. It made him apprehensive of ill success at the Bar, and so entirely unfitted him for the rough and ready exercise of that profession, that after a short trial he abandoned it. This was in the year 1825; and in the following year he was appointed to the chair of jurisprudence in the new institution, now University College. His first class was considerable in numbers, and remarkable for the talent and ultimate success of the pupils, including "several of the men who are now most eminent in law, politics, or philosophy." Unfortunately, this prosperity was shortlived: barristers must needs live: young men must spend some time in the chambers of eminent lawyers; and they cannot afford to attend lectures however excellent, which in no wise make the hearers fitter for practice. The professorship was unendowed, and was

dependent on the fees of the students, of which the number after six years dwindled down to five: there was an end to prospects which at first were brilliant.

Thus concluded for the time, Mr. Austin's career in active life. He had begun by spending five years in the army: he had deserted to the bar: his health of body and mind had proved unequal to this vocation: he had become a professor, an admirable professor, of jurisprudence: success in attracting an audience was wanting. After this he published his Lectures, as to the profundity and perfection of which there are not two opinions: but his ill fortune pursued him; the critics were incapable of appreciating him, and neither of the great Reviews condescended to notice him. The work however, had been readily published by Mr. Murray, and the whole impression gradually sold off, so that at last, as I know, a copy could not be got except at a very advanced price.

After abandoning the professorship, Mr. Austin went to live abroad. He was a disappointed man: his faculty "for untying knots" had not found its proper sphere: he missed the learned leisure of an University, with such appreciation as attends an established professoriat, and such fixed salary as to provide for moderate wants. He was often urged to write on various grave topics to which he had devoted his attention, but he declined to do so: another edition of his Lectures was greatly in request, but he could not sufficiently command his powers, to recast and rewrite his book so as to satisfy his fastidious desire for perfection.

After 1848, having been driven away from Paris,

he settled down near London, and there passed a good many years, apparently the healthiest and happiest of his life. It was towards the close of this period that appeared the pamphlet on Parliamentary Reform.

Now comes the question; whether there was in these circumstances, and in this mental constitution, anything which weakened Mr. Austin's authority when he condemned all proposals for extending the parliamentary constituency.

I reply that there was much which weakened his authority in my estimation. There was a feminine softness which unfitted him for the battle of life; and which must have disqualified him from judging correctly, of the vigorous and often unscrupulous struggles by which public life proceeds in a free country.

If he had enjoyed a healthier organization, he would not have confessed himself beaten, because he failed to attract hearers from among youths who had to live by their profession; and because the popular critics of the great reviews were incapable of appreciating, and perhaps of understanding, his philosophical speculations on law: he would have remembered that such is often the fate of original and profound thinkers; that twenty years after David Hume had published his essays, they were almost unknown to the public, and that he was not prevented by this failure from becoming an historian, and thus extorting from the world an acknowledgment of his merits; that Mr. Austin's own Gamaliel, Jeremy Bentham, was an old man before his original and racy views were generally known, and that

though at one time he was painfully depressed by the neglect he experienced, he persevered steadily in the course of original investigation, and reaped at length his fitting reward of ridicule, abuse, admiration, and reverence. Mr. Austin would have comforted himself with the approbation of the few friends, capable of judging and incapable of flattery: he would have resolved to make the world listen to him and bow to his merits.

Possessed of such vigour and resolution, he would not, I believe, have felt the alarm which he expressed, as to the progress of popular influence in our constitution: he would not have shrunk with the fastidiousness of a recluse from the froth and fury of democratic meetings: he would have denounced the superficial evils, but would have penetrated to the good below.

The argument of the pamphlet is coloured by these peculiarities. We are told that a spirit of compromise is necessary to the smooth working of our government; and no one will dispute this: but the next proposition will not meet with such ready assent; it is that the prevalence of this spirit of compromise in the House of Commons, is owing to the good breeding of the members. "This habitual reverence for the constitutional rights of others, and this habitual moderation in parliamentary battle and victory, have mainly arisen from the breeding of the men who have formed the great majority of the Lower House." This breeding is afterwards interpreted by the phrase "gentlemanly honour," and is mentioned as the peculiar characteristic of an aristocracy.

That good breeding, smoothness of manner, benevolence in trifles, are characteristic of an aristocracy; and that gentlemanly honour prevails among men of birth more than among the middle classes; I concede. But the spirit of political compromise, I am convinced, arises from causes much more deeply seated. There have been other aristocracies in the world, among which the spirit of political compromise has not been found: there have been aristocracies in Sparta of old; in France, Germany, Italy: have they been remarkable for moderation and compromise, or rather for a harsh and cruel repression of everyone who dared to dispute their authority?

The spirit of compromise, it is conceded, is peculiarly British: surely then, the cause should also be peculiar to Great Britain. I find this cause in the *limitation* of our government: in the fact that the predominant power has never been absolute. Monarchy was long predominant, in fact as well as in name; but so long ago as the time of Fortescue, the monarchy was a limited one, and had to conciliate the nobles, the church, and in some degree the commons. After the revolution, William and his successors found that the predominance had passed to the Whig aristocracy; but this body could resist the crown only by an alliance with the Lower House, and by keeping the people in good humour. Since 1832, the predominance has been with the middle classes; who constitute what in the last century was called the people, as distinguished from the people proper, then insolently spoken of as the mob. But this middle class, brought into power by

the reform bill, has met with great resistance from the old aristocratic party in Parliament, and has only held its own by appealing to the class below. Thus, the predominant class for the time being, has never held undisputed sway; but has had to carry on a perpetual struggle. In this struggle all in their turn have learnt self-restraint, and a spirit of compromise: having found by experience, that though they had influence enough to carry through Parliament measures of a moderate character, they would certainly be defeated whenever they proposed violent and oppressive measures, intended to crush their opponents. The spirit of compromise is essentially the recognition of the rights of a minority: in France a minority takes to the barricades; in England it resorts to legal opposition, secure of getting a part of its desire satisfied.

Another source of the spirit of compromise is to be found in the daily habits of the towns. Great numbers of men there, are called upon to serve as jurors, poor law guardians, town councillors, and magistrates; as members of committees of schools, hospitals, gas companies, or banks: they acquire the habit of acting with other men, and of yielding their own opinions when a majority is found against them. They learn that business cannot go on without compromise, and they acquire a moderate and yielding tone. A number of unpractised men, when first thrown together, maintain their individual views with vehemence; they are unyielding and pertinacious: gradually they learn to advance their opinions with diffidence, to hesitate before contradicting other people, and to withdraw from a position which is

untenable: they either have candour, or learn to assume that virtue.

The elderly traders frequently sent up by great towns to the House of Commons, have most of them gone through this training: the political journals speak slightly of them, because they begin public life too late to become prominent, and because also their manners and pronunciation sometimes savour of an unpretending origin. In strong sense however, in the practice of adapting means to ends, they will be found superior by far to the country gentlemen who owe their seats to the greatness of their estates, or to an accidental predominance in a country town. And in this matter of political compromise, the members for great towns come into Parliament with the habit already formed by local experience.

In my opinion therefore, it is not breeding, or gentlemanly honour, to which is due our spirit of compromise: it is the long training of the nation in local self-government, and in the political struggles which arise from the limitation of the predominant power, and which issue in an habitual deference to the rights of minorities.

I differ also from Mr. Austin on another important matter: the character of those to whom additional power is now given. "No man, looking attentively at the realities around him, can doubt that a great majority of the working classes are imbued with principles essentially socialistic: that their very natural opinions on political and economical subjects are partial applications of the premises which are the groundwork of the socialist theories."

I cannot at all understand by what means Mr.

Austin arrived at this opinion, or at any opinion on the subject. I have myself, as a manufacturer, lived a long time in daily intercourse with artisans, and I have taken some pains to learn what their opinions are. I have not made out that they generally entertain any special notions other than those of the rest of the nation, though these notions are modified of course by narrowness of education. I have not discovered among artisans that passion for equality which prevails in France, nor that jealous hatred of capitalists which distinguishes the Paris workmen. Whence Mr. Austin, living in learned seclusion in London, Boulogne, or Paris, derived his undoubting belief, he does not tell us.

Mr. Austin concludes that there is presumptive evidence against the necessity of any reform: or that at any rate much further inquiry would be necessary to justify even the slightest alteration. From the strange premisses I have mentioned, this strange conclusion follows naturally.

v.

ANOTHER opinion from which I equally differ, brings me back to the question, what lessons we have to learn as to unlimited democracy.

“It will hardly admit of a doubt, that the political corruption produced by universal suffrage in the United States, would be produced in the mother-country by *any* elective franchise of a decidedly democratical character.” The Conservative Reform Bill has now given us such an elective franchise: are we to look for that political corruption which

universal suffrage produces in America? are we prepared to find Liverpool in the hands of rowdies such as govern New York? may we expect to see the appointment of judges taken from the crown and conferred on freeholders or parliamentary electors? ought we to anticipate the practice of turning out periodically our clerks of the peace, magistrates' clerks, governors and warders of gaols, excise officers and postmen?

I revert to my former statement: democracy in the United States is unlimited: it is the absence of checks and restraints which is answerable for these corruptions: it is not democracy but unlimited democracy which produces them.

The United States began their political career as colonies: they enjoyed singular freedom from metropolitan interference: they felt themselves oppressed however, by an attempt to levy taxes upon them for imperial purposes: they associated for resistance, and after a deadly struggle cast off the yoke. The war left behind it a resentment which is annually fanned into a flame by ambitious speakers, who denounce the monarchies and aristocracies of effete Europe; and which is fed moreover, by the malignity of millions of immigrant Irish. Until the last seven years also, until the political earthquake of civil war disturbed all the relations of society, the singular facility of earning a living caused an individual self-esteem and an absence of dependence, highly favourable to a democratic spirit. Besides being traditionally detested, monarchy and aristocracy are associated with countries which are stationary, or advance slowly: it is a natural error on the part of

the Americans to attribute to their form of government, advantages which really proceed from the happy position of a civilized and energetic race in the midst of unbounded and fertile land.

Compare their history and their present circumstances, with those of an ancient monarchy, where the government has long been the mildest and the most just to be found in any great European country: where in the eye of the law all men are equal: where few have any grudge against the administration: where the flexibility of the institutions enables them to adapt themselves to the exigencies of society: but where the comparative crowding of the population, causes a perpetual dependence of the poorer classes on the richer, a dependence recognized and fairly met by a benevolence which seldom fails.

The circumstances of Great Britain and of the United States are so different, that it is rash to adopt without much inquiry, the opinion of Mr. Austin as to the similar effects likely to follow in each country from similar political institutions.

A passage in a French work, explains my meaning. "One fact in history must have been remarked by all who like to trace the manner in which social forces are preserved or destroyed: it is, that when old societies are transformed, altering for instance from aristocratic into democratic, they change their skin, but not their flesh and substance; and that the destruction of form does not imply the destruction of the reality beneath."

The writer says afterwards, that the United States will be brought forward as an example against his

opinion, but that they constitute a *new* and not a *renewed* society; with a democratic origin; and where, all the citizens being of uniform condition, there is no choice of governors except among equals.

I am convinced that the future of a country is not to be foretold from the mere consideration of its institutions; but that the history of those institutions, the way in which they have arisen, the modifications they have practically experienced from the traditions and manners and economical circumstances of the people, must all be taken into account.

All these modifications may turn out to be limitations; at any rate for a time and perhaps for ever. In America they are not limitations: the traditions, the manners, the economical condition, all help to promote, and not to restrain, democratic institutions. The name of king is detestable: crowds will gather to see a prince, just as they gather to see a gorilla: but that such a man should reign over them is a hateful thought. Some years ago, I had to do with a contract for the government at Washington: on a pattern tendered a small crown had been used as a trade mark; the agent begged that some other punch should be substituted. It is difficult however, to know where to draw the line which separates their sentiments from ours: for as I hear, the managers of the Oxford University Press went too far when executing a large order for bibles, by leaving out the preliminary letter of King James, as distasteful to republicans; for which omission the bibles were refused and thrown on their hands.

We may safely say then, that to produce unlimited democracy, traditions and manners and economical circumstances must all conspire with established institutions; and that such is the case in the United States.

In Great Britain the reverse, I believe, is true. We have a considerable reverence for the throne; a reverence which has been much strengthened during the reign of Her Majesty, just as it was during the reign of her grandfather Farmer George. I say nothing of the crowds which attend the Queen whenever she visits a great town; for equal multitudes might press to see her in New York or Boston. But I do find that all classes feel a real and affectionate interest in Her Majesty's welfare; and that to a degree which astonishes me, and puts to the blush my own more moderate loyalty. A proof of this offers itself, in the sale by tens of thousands of Her Majesty's notes of travel: an admirable picture of domestic happiness in a palace; where according to cynics it is as impossible as a violet on a sunburnt rock: but a book which, in the hands of a disloyal people, and estimated according to its literary merits, would be ridiculed or neglected. Another proof has appeared in the exuberant loyalty of New South Wales, on the occasion of the atrocious attempt on the life of Prince Alfred; when all the forms of the Constitution were set aside, in order to pass in a few hours, a bill making it a highly penal offence even to propose the separation of the colony from Her Majesty's Empire. I fear that Mr. Goldwin Smith would be an unwelcome visitor at Port Philip.

It does not seem shocking or humiliating to Englishmen, that a man or a woman should reign over them. A philosopher may think the monarch principally useful as filling the throne, and keeping pretenders out of it; but the nation has undefined sentiments of a much warmer character, extending even to the person of the Sovereign.

The same is true in a less degree of the noble families, and especially when they bear historical names. We cannot forget the constitutional claims of the Russells; nor the historical greatness of the Stanleys; nor the romantic traditions of Buccleuch and Argyll.

These sentiments were greatly strengthened by the genius of one man. Sir Walter Scott is regarded in France, not so much as a poet and romance-writer, as the inventor of modern history: as the author who taught Europe that history should be, not a mere collection of facts and figures, but a presentment of men and women as they lived. Now the persons of his romantic history, are to a great extent chieftains and nobles, soldiers and gentlemen; the natural leaders of less civilized periods. These books eagerly read when they appeared, must have acted as a substantial dyke against the advancing waves of democracy during the early part of this century.

The circulation of Scott's romances was unexampled, and the reprints now are extraordinarily great. I hear it said that our young people find them dull, by the side of the lighter and more exciting works of Dickens and Thackeray: but what then becomes of the scores of thousands of

copies poured into the world? It is only by a vast circulation that a publisher can make a profit, when the price is very low: we thought that when Scott appeared in shilling volumes, the extreme was reached: we now see two editions coming out at once, in sixpenny volumes, well printed, each volume containing a complete novel; and I am told that unless each of these impressions obtains a circulation of fifty thousand, there will be little profit to the publishers. I do not know whether there is a similar circulation in the United States: I can scarcely wonder if the friends of the present constitution there, look doubtfully at so aristocratic an author; but I think they would do wisely to promote such reading, in order to introduce some limitation to the democratic sentiments of the people. At any rate, in Great Britain, the wide and continued circulation, must help powerfully in maintaining that respect for ancestors and for ancient institutions, which forms a natural drag on advancing democracy, and which may constitute a limitation for generations to come.

I find that in Russia, among the middle classes, it is a reproach to call a man an aristocrat, just as it was in France in revolutionary days. I see it said also, that in some other European countries, the spirit of caste is bitter and exclusive; that in Prussia and Sweden the aristocracy are oppressive in the exercise of their privileges, are not only reactionary and obstructive in their politics, but are so personally arrogant as to make themselves almost hated. Our nobles and landed gentry are not open to these charges: for if their political sentiments

are opposed on the whole to those of the nation, they know by experience when to surrender them; and they have no privileges which in their exercise cause irritation among the democratic parts of the nation.

In former days, when London was less accessible, noble families had their mansions in such towns as Norwich and Northampton, and resided there occasionally. In the manufacturing towns now, such families would be out of place; and I believe it is fortunate that they are not found there: they look best at a distance; they are well kept for gala days: most of them, to say nothing of the vices attendant upon leisure, are not shrewd enough, or industrious enough, to maintain the respect of men educated from youth to shrewdness and industry. Urbanity of manner and elegance of feminine toilet, command attention and respect when exhibited so seldom as to retain the advantages of novelty. The parvenus among the landowners, envy the older families: townspeople generally, rich and poor, seldom come into collision with them, and never dream of hating them.

The traditional sentiments in towns of respect for birth, form a natural limitation to democracy.

VI.

IT is tedious to repeat, what it is equally difficult and important always to recollect, that the advance or retardation of democracy does not depend principally upon political institutions, but upon prevalent opinions and sentiments. As to

other countries we see this principle plainly. We are often reminded that France enjoyed parliamentary institutions and an unshackled press, during a generation, without learning the secret of political liberty: that Spain has enjoyed similar institutions during a generation, without the substance of either order or freedom: we should be laughed at if we proposed to establish a representative system in India.

I will not deny that a form of government a little in advance of a people, may by a happy chance do something in political education: I am convinced however, that the true aim of all reformers is to adapt institutions to circumstances. Yet some of the journals write as if the Conservative Reform Bill had given a great impetus to democracy; forgetting that if the democratic sentiments existed, there could have been no peace until the elective arrangements were adapted to them; and that if they did not exist, they would have been no more created by the reform act, than true sentiments of regulated freedom were created in France and Spain by parliamentary institutions.

Democracy has undoubtedly advanced in England. But it has not advanced through the passing of the reform bills of '32 and '67: these bills are results and not causes. Democracy has advanced partly through the growth of great towns; which from the days of the Low Countries until now, have always been rebels to absolute authority: it has advanced also through the progress of the many in well being, in prudence, in education. An ill fed, drunken, ignorant race, will care little about political rights;

their cry will be for "bread or blood:" but when the same men take to reading the papers, to accumulating hoards in savings' banks, to discussing political questions, they soon arrive at the conclusions that men are born with equal rights, and that as all classes are interested in good government, all are entitled to a share in electing representatives. I do not wonder that the Tory party at the beginning of the century looked askance at popular education: they were quite right in their prediction that in promoting education they would promote democracy.

Towns have grown: well being has increased: education has advanced: railroad journeys have opened a widening sphere to the eyes of the many; whose minds have been cultivated by penny papers and sixpenny Scotts: these changes are gradually transforming the labourers and artisans into thinking men, conscious of their rights and fit for the exercise of them. The two reform acts have not caused these changes; they have only adapted our institutions to them.

The radical party is often charged by its antagonists with desiring to Americanize our institutions. Particular members of the party may have such a desire: but those who hold such opinions as I have expressed, are far removed from this: they are bent indeed, on making democracy the predominant power in the country; but far from wishing to have it unlimited as in the United States, they long for such limitations as shall control it, shall moderate its force, and shall thus secure the rights of minorities and keep us free from the tyranny of the majority.

With this view, it is highly desirable that all opinions should be represented in the House of Commons: that the conservatives of great towns, and the liberals of counties, should have their members. As a means to this end, what are called three-cornered constituencies have their warm advocates among liberal politicians: as they are now on their trial, prudent men will suspend discussion till experience has tested their utility.

Mr. Hare's scheme aims at the same result on a larger scale. Its very magnitude constitutes its difficulty: if it could be tried on a few constituencies, there might be hope of an experiment; but men of all shades of opinion shrink from a novelty which might land us in a revolution. Yet one fact at the late election, cries aloud in favour of the scheme. The Roman Catholics of England and Scotland, are variously estimated as numbering a million, a million and a half, or two millions. Let us call them one-sixteenth of the population of Great Britain, excluding Ireland. Making due allowance for the poverty of a large part of them, they ought perhaps to have one twentieth of the British representatives in the House of Commons; or to be safe, let us say one thirtieth. This would give them about eighteen members: they have, I believe, only one. It is the way in which they are accidentally distributed which causes this unfairness: they live principally in great towns, and are a decided minority in each of them. If you threw together in moderately sized towns, all the Roman Catholics of Liverpool, Manchester, and other Lancashire places, of Leeds and other Yorkshire

places, of Glasgow and other Scotch places, you would create such majorities as might secure even an unfair predominance to these voters: you might give them, not eighteen members, but twice or thrice that number. Since however, men must reside where they can earn a living, the keenest politicians cannot move them like chessmen, and a change of distribution is impossible. Mr. Hare would move the votes without moving the voters: he would allow the Roman Catholics to club their votes, so as to obtain a number of members in proportion to the number of constituents.

A more pressing reform is that of the House of Lords: what is wanted is not a reduction of its power, but an infusion of new vitality, which shall restore its political energies, and shall enable it to act as the governor of the state engine. During the generation which has seen a great increase of democracy, and which has adapted the House of Commons to that increase, scarcely any alteration has occurred in the Upper House, except that it has very recently abandoned the use of proxies.

Those who remember the struggle of 1830 to 1832, know how great has been the change. A few years before, the Lords had again and again rejected the Bill for Roman Catholic emancipation; and had assumed in such important questions an equality with the lower house. They believed the reform bill to be destructive of the constitution: they debated it warmly, and ended with throwing it out. The liberal ministry had influence enough with the King to extort from him a promise to create new peers; and the Upper House, under

the advice of the Duke of Wellington, crouched to the storm, passed the bill and saved the country from imminent bloodshed.

The Lords have not forgotten the lesson they then learnt: they have not ventured again to oppose themselves to the expressed will of the nation. They have directed their attention to introducing, or more often, amending, bills of social importance; and with such good effect that from time to time is heard the expression, "thank God we have a House of Lords."

But it is worthy of inquiry, whether the influence of that house might not advantageously be increased. The importance of a second house of some kind is generally conceded. In framing the constitution of the United States, Franklin, if I remember right, maintained that one house was enough: but he was overruled, and as it turns out, he was fortunately overruled. The Americans themselves do not propose to abolish the Senate, but on the contrary, look to that comparatively dignified body, for guidance in all complex questions.

It is true that the senate comes into being by election: each state of the union sending a fixed number of members. Hereditary legislators were an impossibility in a new country, and election was far preferable to appointment by the President. No one, I presume, would propose to disturb our traditions by abolishing our hereditary house and substituting an elective senate: a country which is on the whole so fortunate and so well governed as Great Britain, would act with inexplicable folly in adopting any revolutionary measure: so long as primogeniture

holds its ground in our daily habits, an hereditary peerage will not seem so intolerably absurd.

But the House of Lords wants strengthening. The people at large have learnt how few of the peers usually take part in the proceedings: they hear with astonishment that speeches which look able and spirited in the newspaper reports, were actually delivered to half a dozen elderly gentlemen: they see that the time generally bestowed by the upper house on their public duties, is limited to the two or three hours between lunch and dinner: they begin to have their doubts as to the efficiency of that noble assembly.

Many liberal politicians, anxious friends of our constitutional government, share this dissatisfaction: sympathizing with De Tocqueville's poignant regret at the revolutionary disappearance of the French noblesse; alarmed at any appearance of failure in the traditional hold of our nobility on the popular mind; earnestly desiring the triumph of democracy, not by political cataclysms, but by a slow and steady advance; unwilling to lose any established institution, which may assist in continuing that wholesome practice of limitations that has made our government so truly a free one; and they ask, not without anxiety, how the House of Peers can be strengthened.

Lord Palmerston saw the necessity, and took the first step towards supplying it, by the appointment of Lord Wensleydale as a peer for life. The House of Lords, at the instigation, it is said, of Lord Lyndhurst, denied the authority of the crown to grant life peerages, and refused to receive Lord Wensleydale except as an hereditary peer. It is

unnecessary to blame the peers for this decision; since such a change in their constitution could not be expected to be received on the fiat of a minister: but it is to be regretted that the proposition has not led to a formal and authoritative inquiry as to the propriety of adopting the practice of life peerages on a considerable scale.

The House of Lords exists, not for the benefit of its members, but for the good government of the nation: by political expediency, not by any inherent right; a claim to which would be scouted by a people that for two centuries has trampled in the dust the divine right of kings. The propriety of life peerages is a question for the whole nation, which has a deep interest in securing a sound and influential second house.

The advantages of life peerages are obvious: they would furnish a supply of men possessed of ability, of experience, of habitual industry. It cannot be disputed that the position of the heir to an hereditary peerage is one that enervates most young men, and renders them ignorant and idle: fortunately the democratic world sees only the exceptions, and seldom has its attention called to the obscure great: fortunately also, a certain number have not been brought up "in the purple," but have succeeded unexpectedly, after being braced by the necessity of living. Take away however, the great lawyers and the great soldiers raised by their merits, and the House presents but a beggarly appearance. Even now, with these important additions, there is in ordinary seasons a sad want of stir and animation. Life peerages would supply the need.

Would they not help also, to bring the Upper House more into uniformity with the popular sentiments? It is not indeed desirable that one house should merely echo the voice of the other; but there is a wide margin between that state of things and the present one. Now, on nearly every popular question, the people with the House of Commons on one side, have to constrain the peers on the other to give way: legislation is a series of concessions, and the House of Lords is apt to be regarded as the natural enemy of the rights of the nation. A judicious elevation of popular men, would correct this excessive conservatism.

I can easily understand the fears of the hereditary lords, lest one change should bring on another. They see that a portion of their body is actually elective: that twenty-eight Irish nobles are sent to their house for life, and sixteen Scottish for the duration of only one parliament: they may anticipate a suggestion in favour of adopting the same practice in England; that is, of calling on the English peers to choose representatives, instead of all enjoying a right to appear and vote. The liberal party at present would repudiate such a proposition, as tending to aggravate the conservatism of the house: for it would turn the peers into an electoral college, which would be apt, like other electoral colleges, to send representatives all of them holding the opinions of the majority; whereas at present the liberal minority forms no inconsiderable party. But it is impossible to say what might occur hereafter, if life peerages became at all common. If habitual animation reappeared, it might sometimes

happen that after a warm and prolonged debate, there might pour in a number of peers to vote, who would unduly interfere with the decisions of the more active minority; just as at the universities at present, the resident and responsible professors and tutors, are occasionally overpowered by the ignoble crowd of country clergy. The cry might arise in the House, as it has already arisen in the universities, that those who do the work ought not to be interfered with by the incompetent and prejudiced.

How could the peers be sifted, so as to retain for legislators the industrious and able, while banishing to drawing-rooms and paternal mansions, the slothful and ignorant, the self-indulgent and self-important? The lords could not be permitted to make the selection, since they would necessarily send up those who represented the opinions of the majority: Tory statesmen; Eldons and Lyndhursts, Redesdales and Shaftesburys: able men probably, but certainly conservatives. If the choice were left to the crown, that is to the ministry, the independence of the upper house would be gone. I have seen a suggestion that the people should elect: not however, nominating anyone at their pleasure, but confining their choice to some owner of a peerage, whether inherited or received from the crown. The Queen would then make as many lords as she pleased, but the people would determine which of these should be Peers of Parliament.

It is added by the thoughtful inventor of the scheme, that as it would be undesirable to have the upper house a mere double of the lower, the elective body should not be the same for both houses: to

secure this difference, each county or division might elect one Peer; and the constituents might be, all the present electors both county and borough, thrown into one mass: thus, the manufacturing counties might send liberals, and the agricultural counties, conservatives; but most would send tried men, who had been active and useful to their neighbours.

If we were disposed to learn from the United States, we might consider the propriety of entrusting the election to local representative bodies: to Town Councils and future County Boards: but how these should vote, and in what proportions, would be matter of prolonged discussion.

We already possess in this matter of the Upper House, electoral colleges and elective peers: the lords of Scotland constitute one electoral college, the lords of Ireland another; they both send peers to the British Parliament. We might perhaps try in Scotland and Ireland a scheme such as the one proposed: substituting in Scotland first, this popular election for lordly election. The Scottish people would probably rejoice to bring their representative peers more into harmony with themselves. Of course, the majority of the present electoral college, that is, the conservative lords, would protest against what they would call an infraction of the Act of Union; and would clamour to Her Majesty to remember her coronation oath. Such arguments are always at hand, but have always been in the long run disregarded, except among the Medes and Persians.

But if the House of Lords got to this, that it should consist of men partly appointed for life by the crown, and for the rest elected by some external

body, the next step might be a demand for election of other persons by certain bodies, such as the universities of the three kingdoms, and the colleges of physicians and of surgeons, and the inns of court: or for a right of recommending to the crown for life peerages, reserving a right to refuse, with reasons assigned.

Who can say whether sacrilegious men might not go so far as once more to banish the bishops, and substitute members elected directly by the clergy? It would be a bold step for a writer to predict any of these changes; but it requires no gift of prophecy to see that fears of them may hereafter perplex the minds of conservative statesmen.

One thing is obvious: of the few indisputable maxims in politics, there is one applicable to the present case: that reform is the only preventive of revolution. The House of Lords has lost a great part of its political power; it is enfeebled, and is in danger of falling into contempt: the true friends of vigorous and orderly government, will labour to resuscitate that house and to restore its true functions: they will not treat it as a respectable relic of the past, to be humoured and spared for the sake of its traditions: they will regard it as an essential part of our legislative machinery, a little worn in some parts, a little antiquated in others; but capable of being repaired and resuscitated in such a way as to render it a highly useful and popular check on the growing democracy.

Those who distrust every alteration, however wholesome in itself, fearing that it should lead to radical changes, should remember that if the upper

house were rendered more efficient and more popular, new and important duties might be intrusted to it. In the United States the Senate is invested with many high functions : for example, with that of ratifying every international treaty before it can become binding. The time may arrive when some improvident treaty entered into by the ministry, may arouse the nation to desire a check on this unlimited power of the crown : a reformed House of Lords would furnish the necessary organization.

Many constitutional students protest against the modern practice, of allowing the monarch to declare war without consulting parliament. In form, no doubt, the prerogative of declaring war always belonged to the crown : but in days when standing armies were unknown, and our navy was small, the prerogative was a barren one, because the monarch could not move without a grant of supplies : now however, when we have considerable forces always on foot ; when during peace, we spend about twenty five millions a year on the two services ; when with regular army, militia, yeomanry, and above all with volunteers, we have ample means of defence ; and with our unequalled and dreaded infantry, and our now formidable artillery, we could strike terror into the hearts of the bravest of our neighbours ; the crown has no need to wait for the tedious process of getting grants of supplies, but can, if it pleases, declare war at once.

There is little danger of any abuse of this prerogative at present. The predominant power in our executive government has proved itself more bent on peace than the nation at large. Heavily as

the Crimean war pressed on the middle classes, it was not unpopular; and at the time peace with Russia was concluded, I was astonished to find men of the lower middle class, while groaning under the sixteen penny income-tax, expressing deep regret at the sudden cessation of the war, just when we had a chance of redeeming our reputation, which was a little tarnished by the inferiority of our forces to those of France. Again, when the present Emperor of the French showed an inclination to remember the hopes excited by his uncle in favour of the Poles, our government peremptorily refused to take a step on the road to a European war; but in the public there was a strong vibration of sympathy. Denmark would not have been crushed by the Germans, if the decision as to interference had been submitted to a direct popular vote: no, not even if a war with Prussia had been the obvious result, and though we had had to enter on it without the coöperation of France and single handed.

Our executive then, is more peaceable than the nation it governs. Long may it continue so! It is one of the many glories of England, that it has lately set the example of national moderation: retiring voluntarily from the Ionian islands when its usefulness there had ceased; a disinterested action praised by Guizot and others as unexampled in the history of nations: withdrawing also its forces from Abyssinia, to the astonishment of incredulous Frenchmen, who to the last would not believe that after spending two hundred millions of francs, we should come back with a score of rescued captives and a few wounded soldiers.

Our executive is peaceable. May we not apprehend some change for the worse, under the growth of democratic influence? May we not in that case, be glad of some assembly like a reformed House of Lords, to stand between national madness and an administration hating needless bloodshed?

Let the true friends of constitutional government, and therefore of a second and strong and popular house, invite and promote an earnest inquiry into the changes required, to bring the old institution into harmony with the altered circumstances of the nation. The lords themselves have shown the instinct of true conservatism, in surrendering the practice of voting by proxy: a practice logically absurd and possibly dangerous. Though they might have again resisted an unexplained and unasked attempt by the crown to erect life-peerages, they have been willing to discuss deliberately an open proposition to legalize such peerages; and they may soon consent to other changes tending to strengthen and illustrate their assembly.

VII.

CONCLUSION.

SUCH are the opinions of a manufacturer; of one who has long lived among the fierce democracy. He has no fear of the future: because he sees that advancing democracy means improved education, growing sobriety, augmented self-respect, increased civilization; because he is convinced that as men

become fitter to govern themselves, more power naturally and rightfully devolves upon them.

Like other liberals, he regards the Conservative Reform Bill as going beyond the requirements of the case; as giving votes in some places to men too much resembling the corrupt freemen of old boroughs; as bad in statesmanship, and as defensible only on the assumed necessities of party warfare: but these venal suffrages seem to him as being probably as much at the disposal of the conservatives as of the liberals, and therefore not to be counted among the gains of democracy.

He protests against the French practice of appealing to the Revolution of '89, as the starting point of modern liberty: as though we ought to take no account of the struggles in the Stuart days of Great Britain, then "more stormy than the seas which beat upon her coasts;" nor of the civil war and mortal struggle and prosperity and greatness of America. He holds that it is not the failures of France, but the successes of Great Britain and its offshoots which have taught the modern world the art of freedom.

Remembering the bitter animosities of 1830, the narrow escape from bloodshed, the severe struggle by which the great towns set themselves free from the humiliating predominance of the country gentlemen, he cannot be persuaded that there is danger in the present flexibility of Parliament: in its willingness to extend the rights of self-government to all who are fit for it.

In democracy he sees the prevention of anarchy: he does not believe September massacres possible

to men habituated to public life. He finds that the English are a law loving people; accustomed throughout all classes to run for protection to the police, and sympathizing with that body in its efforts to maintain order: he appeals to a late Geneva Congress to prove that English artisans contrast strangely with French, as to the spirit which trusts in the law, and which instead of contravening even a bad law, will strive to get it amended.

He contends that this submissive disposition does not spring from cowardice; since in war, our soldiery has lately shown itself as daring and as stubborn as in the days of monarchical or aristocratic predominance.

The reduction of the pride of birth, the gentleness and tenderness towards the distressed and the criminal, the efforts in favour of free trade by Huskisson, the liberal foreign and colonial policy of Canning, the consolidation and amendment of the law by Peel; all seem to him traceable to the growing influence of the people, and to the conviction that a good administration afforded the only chance of saving the constitution: these changes seem such that though they could not avert democracy, they supplied a natural limitation to it, by the satisfied and moderate spirit they fostered.

Many social improvements have taken place under the writer's eyes: among the middle classes, a growth of public spirit, a submission to heavy local taxation for public buildings and sanitary improvements, an increased desire for education; among the working classes, a reduction of drunkenness, a greater sympathy with the richer classes, a desire

for enlarged means of education, a more civilized deportment, and an augmented decency and propriety easily visible to those whose experience enables them to compare one period with another.

That a democratic spirit has its attendant evils he does not dispute. Envy of all superiority is sometimes its root: in Paris, under a cry for equality the workmen hate their employers: in this country, there are men who regard as an insult to themselves every title of merit, however well earned.

In the United States the tyranny of the majority is oppressive, and is an effectual bar to improvement. In the administration there has been even a serious deterioration, since the days of Washington, Hamilton, Franklin, and Jefferson: judges are chosen by popular vote, for a term of years, and sometimes by men specially interested in their decisions: on the accession of a new President, election services are rewarded by appointment to offices in which ability and purity are essential, but which are thus filled by idlers and drunkards.

But the writer contends that these evils result, not from democracy but from unbridled democracy: he points out that a similar absence of limitations has rendered other forms of government detestable; that absolute monarchy in France and Spain, and that absolute aristocracy in Venice, were far more destructive of happiness and goodness than unlimited democracy is in the United States.

He tries to show how this was misunderstood by so great a thinker as the late Mr. Austin: he accounts for what seem to him Mr. Austin's errors, by the delicacy of his health and his nervous sen-

sitiveness, which drove him successively from the army, the bar, and the arena of legal philosophy; and which therefore, unfitted him to judge of the working of a free government, founded on popular sentiments which are always expressed roughly and sometimes with violence.

Mr. Austin saw clearly that a spirit of compromise was the foundation of our constitutional success. He ascribed this spirit to the good breeding and gentlemanly honour of the members of parliament: the writer holds that it is traceable to very different sources; to the long continued limitations which have prevailed, first on monarchy and afterwards on aristocracy; compelling all parties in turn to respect the rights of minorities, and to rest satisfied with public measures modified to humour the opinions or prejudices of opponents: the writer contends also that the habit of compromise is greatly promoted by the prevalence of local self-government, by which the members sent from towns are trained under the moderating influences of public assemblies.

Mr. Austin again, believed that an extended suffrage in Great Britain, would certainly entail those corruptions which prevail in the United States: such an extended suffrage is now established; those corruptions ought to follow: we ought to see in the course of a generation or two, Liverpool, like New York, handed over to the mercies of rowdies; judges appointed by freeholders or householders; custom house officers, collectors of taxes, gaol warders and postmen, throughout the country, displaced periodically to make room for drunken, swearing loafers.

Mr. Austin apparently, overlooked one great difference between the two countries: that restless, dissatisfied men, are constantly pouring into the one and out of the other. The principal distinction however, lies much deeper than this: it consists in the difference of origin in the government; the United States having started as rebellious colonies, bitterly hostile to monarchy and aristocracy, and therefore wanting any limitation that would arise from such institutions: whereas both monarchy and aristocracy in Great Britain, supported by the traditions current among all classes, constitute a gentle but powerful limitation on popular progress. Our literature too, from Sir Walter Scott downwards, fosters these conservative sentiments. In America a prince is stared at, in England and her colonies he is revered: there a queen is impossible, here she is affectionately maintained: hereditary nobles would there be scorned and hated; but it is not so in Great Britain, for however offensive may be their social predominance among the new landowners, the contractors and traders and London brewers, who, having left their natural sphere, would fain share in the dignities of princes, yet in the democratic towns, where those nobles are little known they are still respected.

The writer insists on the hackneyed but essential truth, that a form of government is principally important in embodying the sentiments of the nation: that parliamentary institutions have failed to give orderly freedom to France and Spain, and that no one even proposes to try them among the natives of India.

What can now be done to adapt our constitution to the altered condition of affairs? to secure for our increasingly democratic government, such limitations as those which gave us true freedom under monarchy and aristocracy? What is wanted is, not to impede the claims of the many to take a share in government, but to maintain and strengthen those sentiments, with their corresponding institutions, which will bridle the popular will, and secure to minorities that consideration which they have hitherto received in this country.

Many liberal politicians look to three-membered constituencies as an important means to this end: as the scheme is on its trial, it is removed from the sphere of discussion until experience supplies the means of safe judgment.

Mr. Hare's plan is ingenious and at least specious: but it is too bold and apparently revolutionary, and it appeals too little to popular sympathies, to command much support; though the case of the Roman Catholics does speak strongly in its favour. The reign of philosophers has not yet begun in England.

The House of Lords seems at present the most worthy of attention; for while the Lower House has experienced two revolutions, the Upper House has remained unchanged in form; and it retains all the conservatism of the past, while power has slipped away from its hands: it wants bracing and strengthening and adapting to altered circumstances; it wants greater activity and brilliancy and the opportunity of extended usefulness.

The propriety of creating a considerable number of life peerages should be seriously considered: and

conservative statesmen should not be scared by possibilities of further change; such as the future banishment of the episcopal bench, or the election of peers from learned bodies; by the pretensions, in short, to make the upper house representative of the highest tone as well as of the highest rank in the country.

A second house, in the opinion of nearly all modern statesmen, is essential to good government; as a check on hasty decisions of the popular representatives, and as a means of securing thorough discussion of important measures possessed of little immediate popular interest, and which slip too easily through an overworked lower house. To establish afresh an able and influential Senate, would be difficult. The present House of Peers has its roots in history, and in the respectful traditions of the people: it has the advantages of birth and fortune, two natural and important qualifications: it has, by the confession of all parties, fewer offensive drawbacks than any other aristocracy. It would be far easier to gradually remodel such a body than to create a new one. It is not for its own sake; not from any claim of hereditary right; but for the sake of the good government of the nation, by the establishment of a counterpoise to the popular will, that the upper house should be purified and strengthened.

These are the opinions of a manufacturer: of one who, far from regretting the extension of democracy, regards it as the inevitable and beneficial result of advancing education and increased well-being; who far prefers American licence to

ancient French or Spanish or Venetian absolutism ; who is convinced that the best government, the truest freedom, the highest welfare of all classes, will be found in LIMITED DEMOCRACY.

“DYSLOGISTIC.”

I.

JEREMY BENTHAM left behind him an evil reputation in the matter of style. To write *Benthamese* is regarded as more intolerable than to write *Johnsonese*. The world has forgotten that there was a period in Bentham's life, when his style was in the highest degree masculine and expressive; and that his juvenile treatise on legislation, published anonymously, was attributed to the great masters of rhetoric. It is interesting to remember that Bentham's veil was lifted by his father; who in his pride at having the work eulogized, blurted out the name of the author. Bentham lived half a century after this, and his reputation was of slow growth: the evil writing that he did lived after him; the good was interred with his bones.

But in the grotesque composition of his later International. life, and among the uncouth terms he revelled in, are to be found some new words of real value. Here and there one has been adopted by the people; who, as Auguste Comte remarks, make the language. It will hardly be believed that the familiar and indispensable word *international*, was of Bentham's coining, and was expressly apologized for in a note.*

* Bentham's Works—i, 149; Note.

He used international law as a substitute for the previous term "law of nations."

Dyslogistic.

The word *dyslogistic*, a favourite child of his, has not been adopted. The form of the word is repulsive, though it is not much worse than that of *eulogistic*, which is well understood by everyone. But it is distressing to find the late Mr. Nassau W. Senior saying, "I use that word" (unscientific) "not dyslogistically, but merely distinctively." (Stat. Jour. 23. 357)

The two words eulogistic and dyslogistic are correlative; the one conveying praise, the other blame; and the particle *δυσ* has in Greek composition the reverse meaning of *εὖ*, just as it is here used.

Agreeably
disappointed.

The word dyslogistic seems to me highly useful, because it expresses an important conception, and because I know no other word which does express it. We hear people say that they expected a wet day, but that they were agreeably *disappointed*. I object to this expression, because agreeably denotes pleasure, and disappointed denotes pain: so that the fine day is stated to have caused at once pleasure and pain. An event may no doubt, cause both pleasure and pain; but a person saying that he is agreeably disappointed, does not mean this, but only that he is agreeably surprised. My censure of the expression is more simply conveyed by saying that disappointed is a dyslogistic word, and is improperly used to express praise of a fine day.

Prejudiced,
prepossessed.

Again: we ought not to say that we are prejudiced in favour of anything. I am prejudiced against the Russians, but I am prepossessed in favour of the Americans.

I find an excellent example of the misuse of dyslogistic words, in Mr. Fitzjames Stephen's excellent Essay on "The Characteristics of English Criminal Law." * "We may consider a criminal trial either as a public investigation, having for its object the ascertaining of the truth with a view to the infliction of punishment; or as a private litigation between two persons, one of whom tries to persuade the judge that the other falls within a class against which the law has denounced certain punishments. These two views may, for the sake of distinctness and shortness, be called the *inquisitorial* and the *litigious* theories, &c."

Litigious and inquisitorial;
F. Stephen.

Now a person reading this passage, would not suppose that Mr. Stephen meant to censure either system. But if the classification took root, and it was generally taught that the English jurisprudence was litigious, and the continental jurisprudence was inquisitorial, thousands of persons would believe that both the systems were detestable. Englishmen abhor the inquisitorial:† all the world hate the litigious.

Future mis-
apprehension.

This inevitable misconception follows from the use of a dyslogistic word to express a distinction not intended to convey censure.

* Cambridge Essays, 1857, pa. 17. This Essay has since been enlarged into a volume, "General View of the Criminal Law of England."

† The word inquisitorial is regarded by Englishmen as a conjugate of inquisition, and calls before the mind the pathos of Corporal Trim. It is curious that bad as the Inquisition was, it has been painted in over-dark shades. Nothing could be worse than the object it aimed at:—the stifling of free discussion. No punishment could be more detestable than the *auto da fé*: but the procedure, the secrecy, the torture of accused persons, the pains inflicted to extort confession, were, as Bentham shows, nothing more than the practice of other tribunals, not only in Spain, but also in France and Germany.

Substitutes—
Inquest-
system and
Plaintiff-
system.

The only justification of Mr. Stephen would be to show that no other terms could be found. I cannot find any adjectives for the purpose. But a compound term may be used, and it is worth while to sacrifice neatness to perspicuity. In England, criminal justice is set in motion by a complaint of the person injured, just as happens in the case of a civil wrong: we may call this the complainant-system, or the *plaintiff-system*. In countries under the civil law, justice is set in motion by an inquest of government: we may call this the *inquest-system*. These terms, though uncouth, are free from danger of misapprehension.

Selfish, self-
regarding.

The word selfish is misused by some persons. When we say that a man is selfish we mean that the man pays an *undue* regard to himself: we mean that he is destitute of a *due* sympathy with others. Now if a gentleman gives a plot of ground for a church, and when he is praised for the act, replies that his principal motive was to improve his building estate, and that therefore his motive in giving was a selfish one, he uses the word in a different sense. He does not mean that the act showed an undue regard to himself, but that it was the result of prudence, not of generosity. Bentham would have said that the act was a self-regarding one: another example of sacrificing neatness to clearness.

The selfish
system of
philosophy.

The word is used also with ambiguity when we call a certain system of moral sentiments, the selfish system. In giving the system this title we condemn it beforehand: we tell the inquirer that he is about to investigate a theory which implies that

men are necessarily wanting in a due regard to their fellows; that if he accepts the theory, he will have to believe that a selfish and a generous man are equally admirable. The self-regarding system indeed, implies no such thing: it only teaches that below selfishness and generosity, (qualities undoubtedly existing) there is a self-regarding base. The upholders of the system, should guard against the inevitable misapprehension, by protesting against this use of the word selfish.

Sensual again, is unhappily applied instead of Sensual. sensuous. A sensual person is one too intent on the pleasures of sense. St. James in our version denounces a certain pseudo-wisdom as "earthly, *sensual*, devilish." Johnson quotes from Milton,

"From amidst them rose
Belial, the dissolutes spirit that fell;
The *sensuallest*; and after Asmodai
The fleshliest incubus."

If a student of philosophy, familiar with these passages, finds a certain doctrine called sensual, he has a prejudice created in his mind, and notwithstanding explanation and protest, cannot quite shake it off. This is the natural effect of using the dyslogistic word sensual instead of sensuous, to express a notion where no censure is intended.

Asceticism too, unfortunately derives much support from this ambiguous language. Sensual habits are condemned on the authority of scripture, and indeed by the universal consent of moralists. The ascetic preacher, avoiding the distinction between the two meanings of the word, carelessly, or dishonestly teaches his hearers that all the pleasures

of sense are sinful; or at any rate, that to dispense with them is the true discipline for the soul. He applies to innocent and wholesome enjoyments the invectives justly directed against ill regulated enjoyments.

Sensuous.

Formerly there was a difficulty in avoiding this danger of misconception, because no second word had obtained currency. Now there is no such excuse, because the word *sensuous* is well understood as having reference to the senses, without any dyslogistic meaning. Sensuous was used by Milton: with a signification, according to Johnson, of "tender, pathetic, full of passion;" but according to Richardson (and I think more correctly) of "full of sense or bodily feeling." But with or without such authority, we shall do well to use the word *sensuous*, when we wish to avoid dispraise. We shall speak of the sensuous part of man's nature: of a sensuous system of philosophy.

Vanity.

The word *vanity* is often misapplied when predicated of a mental quality. Cicero's speeches and actions savoured too much of vanity: we mean here that Cicero had an excessive desire of applause. Authors generally are influenced by vanity to write their best: we mean here that authors wish for the applause of their fellow men; we do not mean that they are wrong in wishing it. In the case of Cicero we use *vanity* in a dyslogistic sense: in the case of authors generally we use it in an indifferent sense. But as our meaning is not to censure authors, we should do better to say that a *desire of applause* stimulated them to write their best. *Vanity* is an ill regulated, or excessive desire of applause.

The word pride shares the same fate. A proud man is an object of aversion; but we praise a working man whose honest pride keeps him from sinking into pauperism. Why not say self-respect? Pride is an ill regulated or excessive self-respect.

Revenge is a word the abuse of which has led to confusion. One of the most characteristic features of Christianity is the precept that no man has a right to revenge. If a man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also. The Society of Friends, adopting these words literally, have found themselves in strange perplexities. Franklin gleefully relates, how the Quaker assembly of Philadelphia, pressed by the British governor for means of defence against the Indians, refused to find cannon, but voted money to buy fire engines; refused to find gunpowder, but voted money to buy grain. I will myself join the society when I find its members consistent; when I see them adopt all the gospel precepts literally; when they consider the lilies how they grow, and taking no thought for the morrow, abandon their warehouses and granaries, and cease to deal in corn and money.

Many other Christian men confess themselves bound by the gospel denunciations of revenge. A man rising from his family prayers finds a thief in his house: he seizes a stick, perhaps a gun, and rushes at him. The unpremeditated act is excused on the ground of passionate impulse. But after a night's rest, and more prayers, he goes to the police office to put the detectives on the thief's track if he has escaped, or to prosecute him if he is caught. The Christian will tell you perhaps, that he acts

Pride.

Revenge.
Christian
precept.How carried
out.

from public spirit. I do not believe him. What! do you accuse him of revenge? By no means: the word is inapplicable: the Christian is only pursuing his rights by just means.

What revenge
really is.

By revenge I understand the ill regulated, or excessive, pursuit of those rights. But preachers and moralists may be found to tell you, that if a man has robbed you, you have no right to get punishment inflicted on him, as a satisfaction to yourself: you are bound to get the punishment inflicted, but only from public motives: you have no right to rejoice in the man's punishment, or to regard it as a mitigation of your loss. But take a stronger case: say that a partner has abused your confidence and ruined you and your family; or that a false friend has eloped with your wife. Still you have no right to wish the punishment of your enemy. When a Quaker tells me this, I can only repeat:—sell all thou hast and give it to the poor; make no provision for the morrow; then I will join your sect. To all other such moralists I say, get you into a convent, for the world is not worthy of you.

Retribution.

But so long as the word revenge is applied to all pursuit of offenders, this confusion of just and of ill regulated pursuit will continue. I contend that a Christian has a right to seek *retribution*, but not to seek revenge. If a rich man has wilfully damaged my house, I have a right to make him pay the cost of restoring it: I seek reparation. If a poor man has committed the same damage, and cannot pay for it, I have a right to have him punished: I seek retribution. If however, I pursue the poor man in

a vindictive spirit; if I urge the authorities to inflict on him the heaviest punishment possible; if I drive him from his employment through the gaol into the workhouse; I then seek more than retribution: I seek revenge.

The neglect of this distinction has clouded the recent discussions on the theory of punishment. It is the fashion at present to say, that the only correct aims of punishment are public example, and reform of the offender. The just satisfaction of the injured person is forgotten. Under imperfect police administration, the injured man beats, stabs, or shoots his enemy: in the better parts of Europe, he now appeals to the law. But the administrators of the law should not tell him that he has no right to retribution: they should be well satisfied if he seeks that retribution by legal means.

Recent theory
of punish-
ment.

In the English Courts, the practice is in conformity with my theory. Our "plaintiff-system," as distinguished from the continental "inquest-system," deals with criminal offences as wrongs done to individuals. The injured person is allowed to interfere in behalf of the offender: in some slight cases declining to press the charge; in others, begging that only a light punishment may be awarded. A recorder or judge, though he may theoretically deny the right of the prosecutor to intervene, feels bound to give, under protest, some weight to such a merciful request. The Court will not so neglect the public interests as to remit all the punishment of a convict, but it will exact less retribution when that will satisfy the prosecutor.

The English
practice.

I know that many philanthropists hold in con- Bentham.

tempt such old fashioned notions ; and they triumphantly appeal to Paley's dictum, that "the proper end of human punishment is not the satisfaction of justice, but the prevention of crimes." Paley's theory was exactly fitted for the defence of the English law, which threatened capital punishment for stealing a horse out of a field, or a trifling sum from a shop. "The crimes must be prevented by some means or other."

It is well to remember that Jeremy Bentham took a very different view of the matter.

So strongly did he hold that retribution was to be demanded from criminals, that he denied the existence of any distinct boundary between civil suits and criminal prosecutions. In both cases, an injured person resorts to a Court for satisfaction of an injury : in the one case he demands reparation, in the other retribution : but these two things seemed to Bentham so nearly alike as to be undistinguishable. Those who deny the private right of retribution set the great jurist at defiance. I conclude that to demand retribution is no more unchristian than to demand reparation for damage ; and that revenge is excessive retribution.

Conclusion,
revenge, and
retribution.

Productive
and unpro-
ductive.

Political Economists seem to me to have applied the word unproductive, without considering that it is a dyslogistic word. A man who should plough and sow the seashore, would employ his time and capital unproductively and madly : a servant who should bury his talent would act unproductively and slothfully : a gambler spends his time and money unproductively and viciously. But Political Economists apply the word unproductive to the well

directed efforts of lawyers, physicians, clergymen, and statesmen: to the efforts of all in short, who do not realize their labour in some commodity. Unproductive here means, unproductive of commodities. The world forgets this limitation to commodities, and educated men may be heard, either disparaging professional services, or else ridiculing Political Economy for its classification.

Hundreds of other words might be given as examples. Against cunning and crafty, I might set shrewd, penetrating, sagacious, astute: against womanish and effeminate, womanly and feminine.

Various other words.

I may say that when a woman is grossly insulted, she is humiliated but not disgraced: that when bad men conspire, good men must combine.

Americans have fixed on what we call perquisites, the dyslogistic name of stealings.

I was lately surprised to find an eminent French author speak of Buffon as more ignorant than Cuvier. Himself a naturalist, he did not mean to disparage either of those great thinkers: he only meant that of certain facts now well known, Buffon knew even less than Cuvier.

French authors. Ignorant.

The French now commonly speak of certain writers as men who vulgarize science, and of their works as vulgarizations: they would call Sir John Herschel a man who had vulgarized astronomy. They do not use these words dyslogistically: they highly praise such a man as Herschel for condescending to such efforts. All they mean is that he has popularized science.

Vulgariser.

In one compound name, the English still employ vulgar in the sense of popular: they say vulgar-

fractions; not without some perplexity to young learners, who, as I can testify, sometimes begin with imagining that vulgar-fractions have something bad about them.

Vénalité.

In a late publication again, there are some papers on the *vénalité* of offices. With us, venal means mercenary: both it and venality are dyslogistic. The author I speak of uses venal in its etymological sense of saleable.

Officieux.

Our word officious formerly meant, ready to perform offices good or bad: it is now confined to the bad sense of importunate in services. The French *officieux* is not like ours dyslogistic.

Scepticism.

The word scepticism had long had a bad reputation: it indicated a state of mind closed to the reception of evidence: it made the reader revert to the slave in Lucian who denied his own existence till his master beat belief into him. Mr. Buckle audaciously tried, and not altogether without success, to gain for the sceptic the credit of merely obeying the apostolic command:—prove all things.

Profane history.

We still talk of history as divided into sacred and profane: why not call it ecclesiastical and secular?

Trimmer.

The word trimmer, as Macaulay tells us, was at first innocent of ill meaning: the celebrated Earl of Halifax dubbed himself a trimmer, because, fearing the predominance of any one party, he supported each party when it was weakest; just as a cautious sailor, to trim a boat, throws himself on the side deserted by others. The politic Earl, intent on the public good, deserted to the weaker party: trimmers among us desert to the stronger party; hoping to find place, salary, power or title.

Trimmer therefore, has now a dyslogistic significance.

A more recent example of a trimmer in the Halifax sense is found in Camille Jordan; the friend of Madame de Staël and of Royer Collard. Camille Jordan, gentle in temper, but fierce and stubborn in resistance to wrong and oppression, disgusted with the unspeakable horrors he witnessed in his native Lyons, at the opening of the revolution of '89, became a Constitutionalist: disappointed with the selfish career of Napoleon, he adopted the cause of the banished dynasty: during the restoration, alarmed at the reactionary sentiments of the old noblesse, he threw himself into the liberal opposition. Then he died. He was always in opposition: not through a crooked temper, delighting in strife and faction; not steering too nigh the sands to show his wit: but because living in times of violent and unmeasured opinions, he desired to trim the state vessel by joining the neglected side. Long may the world see such trimmers, who in favour of liberty and patriotism, desert the party in which profit and honour are to be found! Would that the English had spared the name trimmer its dyslogistic sense!

It may be thought that this formal exposition of an obvious error is unnecessary: since common sense must teach us not to apply to a praiseworthy or an indifferent thing, a term that suggests condemnation. I reply by pointing to the names of Fitzjames Stephen now, and of Adam Smith formerly, as examples of men who have disregarded the rule.

Value of the discussion.

We are told that the study of English Grammar is

As grammar.

unnecessary, because we see that grammarians write bad English, while non-grammarians write good English. It is quite true that knowledge of grammar will not teach a man to write well: many other qualifications are necessary for this. All that grammar teaches is to avoid certain errors and imperfections.

As logic.

So, others object that logicians are capable of unsound reasoning. Again I say, other qualifications are necessary besides knowledge of logic, to fit a man for sound reasoning. But logic teaches us to avoid certain errors in reasoning; and it gives a sagacity and a quickness in detecting fallacies.

So any formal rules.

Other things being equal between two authors, the grammarian will write the better English, and the logician will elaborate the sounder reasoning. I believe it will be the same with the formal rule as to dyslogistic words: it will not teach men to write or to reason; but it will teach them to avoid a common mistake. The word dyslogistic contains a rule: familiarity with it would prevent men from speaking of inquisitorial and litigious systems when inquest and plaintiff systems are intended: from using selfish for self-regarding; sensual for sensuous; vanity for just desire of applause; pride for self-respect; revenge for retribution; unproductive for unproductive of commodities; womanish or effeminate for womanly or feminine; conspire for combine; ignorant for less informed; venal for saleable; officious for ready to render services; scepticism for intellectual caution; profane history for secular history; trimming for patriotic self-denial.

NOTE.

FEW people would guess that Bentham was the author of the following passages.

“Your predecessors made me a French Citizen : hear me speak like one. War thickens round you : I will show you a vast resource :—EMANCIPATE YOUR COLONIES. You start : hear and you will be reconciled. I say again, *Emancipate your Colonies*. Justice, consistency, policy, economy, honour, generosity, all demand it of you : all this you shall see. Conquer, you are still but running the race of vulgar ambition : emancipate, you strike out a new path to glory. Conquer, it is by your armies : emancipate, the conquest is your own, and made over yourselves. To give freedom at the expense of others, is but conquest in disguise : to rise superior to conquerors, the sacrifice must be your own.—Reasons you will not find wanting, if you will hear them : some more pressing than you might wish. What is least pleasant among them may pay you best for hearing it. Were it ever so unpleasant, better hear it while it is yet time, than when it is too late, and from one friend than from a host of enemies. If you are kings, you will hear nothing but flattery ; if you are republicans, you will hear rugged truths.”

“J. B. to the National Convention of France.”
1793. Works, Part IV, pa. 408.

The next quotation is more satirical than just ; but no one can charge its style with any want of perspicuity.

“Ascetic is a term that has been sometimes applied to monks. It comes from a Greek word which signifies *exercise*. The practices by which monks sought to distinguish themselves from other men were called their Exercises. These exercises consisted in so many contrivances they had for tormenting themselves. By this they thought to ingratiate themselves with the Deity. For the Deity, said they, is a Being of infinite benevolence: now a being of the most ordinary benevolence is pleased to see others make themselves as happy as they can: therefore to make ourselves as unhappy as we can is the way to please the Deity. If any body ask them, what motive they could find for doing all this:—Oh! said they, you are not to imagine that we are punishing ourselves for nothing: we know very well what we are about. You are to know, that for every grain of pain it costs us now, we are to have a hundred grains of pleasure by and by. The case is, that God loves to see us torment ourselves at present: indeed he has as good as told us so. But this is done only to try us, in order just to see how we should behave: which it is plain he could not know without making the experiment. Now then, from the satisfaction it gives him to see us make ourselves as unhappy as we can make ourselves in this present life, we have a sure proof of the satisfaction it will give him to see us as happy as he can make us in a life to come.” Part I, pa. 4, note.

Swift would not have been ashamed of the last satire, nor of this.

“It is curious enough to observe the variety of

inventions men have hit upon, and the variety of phrases they have brought forward, in order to conceal from the world, and, if possible, from themselves, this very general and therefore very pardonable, self-sufficiency.

1. One man (Lord Shaftesbury, Hutchinson, Hume, &c.) says, he has a thing made on purpose to tell him what is right and what is wrong; and that it is called a *moral sense*: and then he goes to work at his ease, and says, such a thing is right, and such a thing is wrong—why? ‘because my moral sense tells me it is.’

2. Another man (Dr. Beattie) comes and alters the phrase: leaving out *moral*, and putting in *common*, in the room of it. He then tells you, that his common sense teaches him what is right and wrong, as surely as the other’s moral sense did: meaning by common sense, a sense of some kind or other, which, he says, is possessed by all mankind: the sense of those, whose sense is not the same as the author’s, being struck out of the account as not worth taking. This contrivance does better than the other; for a moral sense, being a new thing, a man may feel about him a good while without being able to find it out: but common sense is as old as the creation; and there is no man but would be ashamed to be thought not to have as much of it as his neighbours. It has another great advantage: by appearing to share power, it lessens envy: for when a man gets up upon this ground, in order to anathematize those who differ from him, it is not by a *sic volo sic jubeo*, but by a *velitis jubeatis*.

3. Another man (Dr. Price) comes, and says, that

as to a moral sense indeed, he cannot find that he has any such thing: that however he has an *understanding*, which will do quite as well. This understanding, he says, is the standard of right and wrong: it tells him so and so. All good and wise men understand as he does: if other men's understandings differ in any point from his, so much the worse for them: it is a sure sign they are either defective or corrupt.

4. Another man says, that there is an eternal and immutable Rule of Right: that that rule of right dictates so and so: and then he begins giving you his sentiments upon anything that comes uppermost: and these sentiments (you are to take for granted) are so many branches of the eternal Rule of Right.

5. Another man (Dr. Clark), or perhaps the same man (it's no matter) says, that there are certain practices conformable, and others repugnant, to the Fitness of Things; and then he tells you at his leisure, what practices are conformable and what repugnant: just as he happens to like a practice or dislike it.

6. A great multitude of people are continually talking of the Law of Nature; and then they go on giving you their sentiments about what is right and what is wrong: and these sentiments you are to understand, are so many chapters, and sections of the Law of Nature.

7. Instead of the phrase, Law of Nature, you have sometimes Law of Reason, Right Reason, Natural Justice, Natural Equity, Good Order. Any of them will do equally well. This latter is most used in Politics. The three last are much more tolerable than the others, because they do not very explicitly

claim to be any thing more than phrases : they insist but feebly upon the being looked upon as so many positive standards of themselves, and seem content to be taken, upon occasion, for phrases expressive of the conformity of the thing in question to the proper standard, whatever that may be. On most occasions, however, it will be better to say *utility* : *utility* is clearer, as referring more explicitly to pain and pleasure.

8. We have one philosopher (Woolaston), who says, there is no harm in any thing in the world but in telling a lie : and that if, for example, you were to murder your own father, this would only be a particular way of *saying*, he was not your father. Of course, when this philosopher sees any thing that he does not like, he says, it is a particular way of telling a lie. It is saying, that the act ought to be done, or may be done, when, *in truth*, it ought not to be done.

9. The fairest and openest of them all is that sort of man who speaks out, and says, I am of the number of the Elect : now God himself takes care to inform the Elect what is right : and that with so good effect, that let them strive ever so, they cannot help not only knowing it but *practising* it. If therefore a man wants to know what is right and what is wrong, he has nothing to do but to come to me.

It is upon the principle of antipathy that such and such acts are often reprobated on the score of their being *unnatural* : the practice of exposing children, established among the Greeks and Romans, was an unnatural practice. Unnatural, when it means any thing, means unfrequent : and there it means something ; although nothing to the present purpose.

But here it means no such thing: for the frequency of such acts is perhaps the great complaint. It therefore means nothing; nothing, I mean, which there is in the act itself. All it can serve to express is, the disposition of the person who is talking of it: the disposition he is in to be angry at the thoughts of it. Does it merit his anger? Very likely it may: but whether it does or no is a question, which, to be answered rightly, can only be answered upon the principle of utility.

Unnatural, is as good a word as moral sense, or common sense; and would be as good a foundation for a system. Such an act is unnatural; that is, repugnant to nature: for I do not like to practise it; and, consequently, do not practise it. It is therefore repugnant to what ought to be the nature of every body else.

The mischief common to all these ways of thinking and arguing (which, in truth, as we have seen, are but one and the same method, couched in different forms of words) is their serving as a cloke, and pretence, and aliment, to despotism: if not a despotism in practice, a despotism in disposition: which is but too apt, when pretence and power offer, to show itself in practice. The consequence is, that with intentions very commonly of the purest kind, a man becomes a torment either to himself or his fellow-creatures. If he be of the melancholy cast (Dr. Price), he sits in silent grief, bewailing their blindness and depravity: if of the irascible (Dr. Beattie), he declaims with fury and virulence against all who differ from him; blowing up the coals of fanaticism, and branding with the charge of cor-

ruption and insincerity, every man who does not think, or profess to think as he does.

If such a man happens to possess the advantages of style, his book may do a considerable deal of mischief before the nothingness of it is understood."

SIR SAMUEL BENTHAM:

BRIGADIER-GENERAL IN THE RUSSIAN SERVICE, AND KNIGHT
OF THE RUSSIAN ORDER OF ST. GEORGE: INSPECTOR-
GENERAL OF BRITISH NAVAL WORKS.

SIR SAMUEL BENTHAM was born nine years after his celebrated brother Jeremy. His birth on the 11th January 1757, was immediately followed by the loss of his mother. When he was only six years old he was sent to Westminster School. Three years later, his father married the widow of the Rev. John Abbot; of whose two sons, Farr and Charles, Charles was afterwards the eminent Speaker of the House of Commons, who was created Baron Colchester. It appears from the testimony of Jeremy, who was about eighteen at the time of the marriage, that Mrs. Bentham treated Samuel as well as himself with the same warm affection that she exhibited to her own sons. Charles Abbot was Samuel's especial friend; and in after life the two men had the most perfect mutual confidence, and laboured together for the public service.

Mr. Bentham, who was an eminent solicitor, destined both his sons for liberal professions, and brought up Jeremy as a barrister: but he prudently

gave way to Samuel's decided wish to become a naval architect; and bound him apprentice in his fourteenth year to Mr. Gray, a master shipwright in the Royal Dockyard at Woolwich; who received, besides the apprenticeship premium, £50 a year for his board. When the boy attained the age of fourteen, he was admitted into the royal service. He afterwards removed with Mr. Gray to Chatham.

The apprentice was required to work with his own hands at shipbuilding: but he had plenty of time at command for other pursuits; and he was a diligent student of geometry, chemistry, drawing, grammar, and French. When he was only fifteen he invented an improved chain pump; but the Navy Board, while admitting the excellence of the invention, declined to adopt it, because they "had already a contract for pumps;" and as it is reported, because they had a contractor whom "they did not like to turn off."

After four or five years of diligent application, Samuel Bentham was sent to Caen, with Farr and Charles Abbot, to perfect his knowledge of French: an accomplishment of great importance to him during his subsequent life abroad. I wonder that during all the recent discussions on teaching modern languages in the public schools, this simple practice of sending a boy abroad for a short time has received so little attention. A visit of a few months to a family in Paris, where no English is spoken, teaches a boy of twelve more French than he would acquire throughout his school career; and a month in France every second or third year afterwards during the holidays, would more than recover what might be forgotten.

A boy so taught, rises above the miserable English accent; besides that he early rubs off many insular prejudices.

On the expiration of Bentham's apprenticeship, he continued his education: acquired the German language, entered other royal dockyards, and in 1778, served as a volunteer on board the *Bienfaisant*, commanded by Captain Macbride. In the same year, he was introduced to Captain Jervis, afterwards Earl St. Vincent; whom he did not again meet for 22 years; but whose confidence and friendship were afterwards of considerable importance to him.

1779, æt. 22.
Visits the
Continent.
Holland.

In 1779, on the suggestion of Earl Howe, First Lord of the Admiralty, Samuel Bentham went abroad to study the proceedings of other maritime nations. He was furnished with letters of introduction of great value; and indeed through life he had the support of men of the highest official rank. He is described by his widow as having been a tall, handsome young man, of elegant manners, and known in continental society as *le bel Anglais*. Sir Joseph Yorke, our ambassador at the Hague, received him kindly; and he learnt all the particulars of the Dutch practice of shipbuilding.

The Baltic.

He next visited the ports of the Baltic. He received and refused a liberal offer from the Grand Duke of Courland, to assist in the management of the timber of the country.

1780, æt. 23.
Russia.

When he arrived at St. Petersburg, he was only twenty-three years old: but he was received in a very flattering way by the Ambassador, Sir James Harris, afterwards the Earl of Malmesbury; who gave him the benefit of his advice, and carried him

into the best society of St. Petersburg. Bentham owed his introductions to his English friends; but the confidence he inspired, and the friendship he contracted, were his own. The Russians took to him as kindly as his own countrymen. He was offered the important post of Director General of Ship Building and Marine Works. He feared that his father would disapprove his acceptance of the office; and as he had come with the fixed intention of returning home when he had completed his tour of inspection, he declined the proposal.

After visiting Cronstadt, he set out for Moscow on his way to the southern seaports. The Crimea had been torn from Turkey some ten years before, but was now governed by an independent Khan. Russia in the same war had gained its first footing on the Black Sea: Catherine had laid the foundation of the port of Cherson at the mouth of the Dnieper: but Bentham found only about 180 houses there; and he learnt that the black General Hannibal, who was in command, could scarcely find a timber tree within 200 miles.

Returning to St. Petersburg, he set out in the next spring to visit the Ural Mountains and Siberia. On his journey he was struck with the inefficiency of hand labour applied to the working of wood: this led to his invention of machinery for planing, which was followed afterwards by sawing and shaping apparatus; all of which answered their purpose, but were ultimately superseded for the most part by Brunel's more perfect instruments.

He visited St. Petersburg again in 1783, and found no diminution in the heartiness of his friends.

Cronstadt.
Moscow.
Cherson.

1781, æt. 24.
Ural M.
Siberia.

1783, æt. 26.
Temporary
Chargé
d'Affaires.

The Russian authorities, here as everywhere, paid him marked attention : Sir James Harris made him Chargé d'Affaires during the interval between his own departure and the arrival of the Ambassador appointed to succeed him. Catherine, after becoming acquainted with Bentham's suggestions of mining improvements, and with his proposal to superintend the execution of them, offered to engage him in her service ; leaving the terms to be fixed by himself.

1784, æt. 27.
Appointment
in Russian
service.

At Catherine's desire, he was about to take charge of the Olmutz Mines ; but for a time he was detained at St. Petersburg, and was made a Conseiller de la Cour, with the civil rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. He was intrusted with the works of the Fontanha Canal.

Proposed
marriage.

The delay in dispatching him to Olmutz was caused by a proposed marriage with a Russian heiress, a niece of the Grand Chamberlain, Prince Galitzin. The young lady was attached to him ; the court circle favoured the match ; the Empress purposely kept Bentham in the capital, and even recommended a secret marriage : but the mother's consent was wanting, and after months of anxiety, the Englishman's sense of honour put an end to the affair. The heiress however, was willing to renew the negociation ; and to spare her feelings as well as his own, he determined to leave St. Petersburg ; and he accepted an offer from Prince Potemkin.

Goes to Prince
Potemkin's
estates.

That strange noble,* once the lover, then the counsellor of Catherine, had been the adviser and

* Jeremy Bentham mentions that Potemkin had been known to spend three weeks together in card playing : " so that if any business was done, it was when the cards were dealing." Jeremy B. Works. Part 19, pa. 161.

the agent in getting for Russia its hold on the Euxine. He offered Bentham an appointment at Cherson: he made him Lieutenant-Colonel in the army; his former rank having been only in the civil service; and his employment was to be in anything he chose to undertake.

When Bentham had come to Russia in 1780, The Crimea. the Crimea, though it had been separated from Turkey, was nominally independent of Russia. But in 1784-5, Prince Potemkin had seized an occasion for annexing it. It had now become doubly important to strengthen the Czarina's administration on the Euxine. The Prince's own estate, of which Cricheff was the principal town, was larger than Yorkshire, and had a population of 40,000 males.

Bentham settled at Cricheff* having made a At Cricheff
ship building. fatiguing but most agreeable journey, in the same carriage with the Prince: he at once made suggestions as to improving the farming. His immediate business however, was to build ships; and his authority was so unlimited that he was at liberty, if he pleased, to construct a vessel "with twenty masts and one gun." Unfortunately, shipwrights there were none: common carpenters and joiners were the best men he could get: rowers even were unknown. However, he set to work with the help of two or three serjeants who could write and draw, besides a Danish brass founder and an English watchmaker. He lived in the Prince's house, which he described as a tottering barn pierced with

* Or Tcherigov or Kriezew. See Jeremy B.'s Works, Part 19, pa. 181. The town is situated on the right bank of that R. Don which runs into the Dnieper at Loev.

windows. Sydney Smith, when he was a curate, dined on bread and ketchup: Bentham at Cricheff dined on bread and salted cucumbers.

Potemkin's
factories.
B.'s regiment.

Potemkin had many manufactories on his estate: these were in great disorder: the workmen were oppressed. Bentham undertook to reform the abuses. He had under his care, a rope-walk, a sail-cloth manufactory and a tanyard; a distillery; several glass-houses; a pottery; and a forge for tool making. At the same time he had to learn his duties as Colonel of a battalion which was now intrusted to him, though he had not passed through the subordinate ranks. At this time he was under thirty. He seems to have exercised his authority with decision but with gentleness. The Russians are a docile race, or they would not have submitted peaceably to this foreign rule: but his consideration for the well-being of the workmen and private soldiers, secured him from violent outbreaks.

Jeremy
Bentham's
visit.

The following year, he had the pleasure of a visit from his eminent brother, who underwent the long journey from London to see him again. Jeremy made great preparations for this journey,* by collecting varied and extensive information on agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. He was accompanied by a Mr. Henderson, who was intended to manage a great dairy for the Prince. Jeremy was in direct correspondence with Prince Potemkin, and sympathized strongly, no doubt, with his efforts for the civilization of White Russia. The Prince was a true successor of Peter the Great: who

* Works of Jeremy Bentham, Part 19, 1842, pa. 147.

laboured to obtain in a generation the natural growth of centuries; and who thought he could import the refinements of the West, as others import its watches and silks. The Czar partly succeeded, because he left his task to be continued by his successors: the Prince's costly and laborious experiments seem to have died with him.

Jeremy Bentham's patron, Earl Shelburne, now become Marquis of Lansdowne, had shown his appreciation of Samuel three years before by offering him a Commissionership in the Navy: he now sent him a present of a sword which he might wear as a Russian Colonel. The Marquis also made professions of what he would have done for him if he had remained in power: but such professions cost the old politician little.

M. of Lansdowne's appreciation.

A reader of Lady Bentham's biography of her husband, will get a very imperfect idea of the Cricheff experiment: he will suppose that Colonel Bentham's exertions were not without success, in evolving order out of chaos. The brother's account is less satisfactory. He says that there had been imported "a master turner, a master currier, a gardener, and divers other mechanics and artizans." The English workmen were under the charge of Dr. Debraw (pa. 161) who sent a Journal of Transactions, "in which laziness, thieving, quarrelling, drinking,—large demands for doing nothing,—all outgoings—no incomings—form pretty nearly the whole record." At Zadobras, the estate on which the Colonel lived, there were "an English gardener, a Welsh major-domo, a Quaker tanner, a German quack doctor, to say nothing of a host of subordinates who took to

Jeremy B.'s account of Cricheff.

quarrelling and plaguing every body about and above them." It is hinted that the Colonel had more "invention, cleverness, and genius," than economy. "Genius and economy are always quarrelling: their thoughts run in separate channels." "The result of all this was what will be easily imagined. Much money was lost, and much discontent existed; and the place was afterwards sold by Potemkin to a Pole." Payments seem to have been made irregularly: for on one occasion a German to whom Samuel owed money, was so exasperated by delay, that he tried to extort the sum from the other brother by holding a pistol to his head.

Samuel's inventive genius was not at rest. The Prince set him upon a task exactly fitted for him: the construction of a novel, light yacht, for the use of the Empress in her proposed passage down the Dnieper. The result was a series of six boats combined; or a multiple boat which from its wormlike flexibility he (or probably his brother) named the *vermicular*. The difficulty he found also, in securing due superintendence of workmen, led him to the invention of a building, in which the manager from one central point should have a view of all his subordinates. This was the origin of Jeremy's unfortunate Panopticon, which embittered many of the best years of his life, and almost ruined him.

The confusion at Cricheff had not shaken the confidence of Potemkin; who was now Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armies, and had to organize a naval force to resist the Turks, who had again begun hostilities. Colonel Bentham was required to put himself under the command of the Admiral

Panopticon
building.
Vermicular
yacht.

1787, æt. 30.
Commands at
sea.

at Cherson: a change of service from land to sea, which seems strange to our regulated notions, but which was common in England in the days of the Stuarts. The position was critical; for there was no fleet either in or out of commission; and the only vessels available were the pleasure galleys in which the Empress had descended the Dnieper, with a few hoys and transports. To crown all, the Admiral was called away, and Colonel Bentham was left "in sole command of the Admiralty department, with the entire disposal of the naval force at Cherson."

It was not till the next year that any fighting took place. In the spring of 1788, Prince Nassau, a volunteer, was put at the head of the flotilla which had been extemporized; and Colonel Bentham, another volunteer, served under him. They had to act in concert with Paul Jones, who beginning life as a common sailor in Scotland, had risen by ability and daring, to high command, first in the United States and then in Russia; and who is remembered in the traditions of his native Scottish coast as one of the scourges of God. The Turks, despising the flotilla, dispatched some of their small craft against it on the 7th June; but they suffered so much from the heavy armament which was on board, that they found it necessary to retreat. On the 16th June they made a second attack with 96 men of war and some smaller vessels, the flotilla not numbering half so many, and being ill supported by Paul Jones. The Turks again withdrew, and the flotilla followed. Two days later, the flotilla again engaged, and without any assistance from Paul Jones. Colonel

Naval Battle.

Bentham said afterwards, that in their manœuvres they had about as much discipline as a London mob: but as he was the first to receive orders to engage, he laid himself close on the quarter of the largest of the enemy's ships, and remained in action two hours, with bomb-shells falling thick around him. The Turk at length surrendered the ship, and Bentham escaped without a wound. The result was a decisive victory; which apparently, was gained as much by the superiority of the heavy ordnance of the fragile flotilla, as by the spirit and stubbornness of the Russian crews.

Rewards.

These actions in the Liman of Otchakoff, delivered the Russians from the dangerous predominance of the Turks at sea. Paul Jones afterwards claimed for himself the glory of the victories. The Russian government proved their estimation of the real conquerors, by bestowing on Colonel Bentham the military order of St. George, and by promoting him to the rank of full colonel. Potemkin had before this, begged him to exchange into the naval service, for which he was eminently fitted by his long devotion to maritime affairs: his success in command now opened to him a brilliant career as an admiral: but foreign rank and wealth were subordinate in his estimation to the one cherished object of his ambition: to be the foremost man in England in the *civil service* department of naval construction and in the reformation of the dockyards. Nor was a warlike command a thing he loved: he said, "fighting for once in a way is well enough, but it is an *abominable trade to follow*."

Removes to
Siberia.

Colonel Bentham's labours as manager of Potemkin's

estates had been fruitless to the Prince, and harassing to himself: his naval service had been brilliant and valuable: the Prince could not refuse his request to be removed to a command in Siberia; and he gave him a regiment of which the two battalions were 1200 miles apart, one of them being quartered on the frontier of China. Here he made many journeys of exploration, without paying much attention to the limits imposed on him by the general officer in command.

I have already mentioned some of Colonel Bentham's inventions; his panopticon building, and his vermicular yacht. In his Siberian journeys he travelled in a novel vehicle: a boat-carriage which he had invented nine years before. This was simply a carriage on ordinary springs, with the body built boat shape and water-tight; and with means of easily taking off the wheels and stowing them as ballast.* In a wild country, intersected with rivers, and unfurnished with bridges, the *amphibious* carriage was found useful. The inventions for machine-working in wood will be enumerated hereafter.

Mechanical
Inventions.

After having laboured to improve the discipline of his regiment, besides introducing a school in the quarters on the borders of China; and after having explored parts of the country little known, and taken measures to promote the Russian trade with China and with America, he got leave of absence and visited England. He passed through Paris, which he found in the throes of the Revolution. He saw several members of the noblesse whom

1791, æt. 34.
Goes to
England.

* Apparently, it might be floated with the wheels on. Biography, pp. 28 and 93.

he had known in Russia, and who as yet retained their rank. "He was furnished with a billet of entrance to the National Assembly, on the *last* occasion when Comte de Ségur had power to give him one, and was with the Duc de Richelieu in his box at the opera the *last* time that his Grace enjoyed it."

Visited the
manufac-
turing
districts.

Bentham could not be idle: he naturally desired to compare the manufacturing condition of his own country with that of Russia. A tour of inspection much disappointed him: he found steam power far less generally applied than he had expected. The truth is that England had only recently become a generally manufacturing country: thirty years before, and even considerably later, we exported more wheat than we imported. It is true that under Pitt's French treaty, there was a prospect of a large trade in our hardware, which according to Arthur Young, was far cheaper than that made in France. In the woollen manufacture we had always been preëminent. But cotton goods were little used: for till about 1780 they were dearer than linens;* and it was customary for the sake of cheapness, to *adulterate cotton with flax*. At that time, "British mull muslin" was sold at half a guinea a yard, though it was inferior to the present muslin at two pence a yard.† In India on the other hand, at a period coeval with that of the foundation of Rome, muslin was made so fine that it was forbidden by Buddha for the use of women, on the ground of its indecent transparency.‡

* Macpherson, 4, 81. † R. Owen, *Life*, 1, 25.

‡ Col. Sykes in *Stat. Journal*, 21, 454.

These however, were not the productions which especially attracted the attention of the naval constructor and soldier-sailor. Wood was the material of ships, and wood was uppermost in his mind. Some ten years before this, he had written home about his inventions, but nothing had come of it. He found no machines in use but turning-lathes, and some saws and boring tools employed in making blocks for the navy. Even saw-mills were almost unknown; though they had been used for 300 years in Germany and Norway.*

Working of
wood.

Old Mr. Bentham had lately died; and had left to Jeremy, the elder brother, his house and extensive premises in Queen-Square Place, Westminster. The two brothers agreed to turn the outhouses into an amateur manufactory, in which with the help of a steam engine, Samuel's machines, made, not as models, but of full working size, might be set to work. If the scheme had been carried out, the brothers' recently acquired fortune would probably have melted away.

Jeremy B.
joins him.

Their attention however, was diverted to another object, which combined the wood inventions with a matter of public importance. It was at this juncture, that Jeremy consented to undertake the construction and management of a Panopticon prison; in which the Governor, seated at one point, like a spider at the centre of his web, might survey all his 1000 prisoners without being seen by them. Work must be found for them: and it was thought that the working of wood by the proposed machines would

The
Panopticon
undertaken.

* Lady Bentham states erroneously that they were *quite* unknown in England. See Penny Cyclopædia, Article, Saw-mill.

be exactly suitable; because it would not require any skill or previous instruction. The steam-engine for Queen-Square Place was therefore abandoned: and Colonel Bentham got an extension of leave of absence from Russia.

1791 & 1793,
æet. 34 to 36.
Patents.

The perfecting and constructing of a number of machines is not the work of a day or of a month. The first patent was taken out on the 26th of November, 1791: the second patent not until the 3rd of April, 1793: the third two years later. Full sized machines were made for “planing, sawing in curved, winding, and transverse directions; including an apparatus for preparing all the parts of a highly finished window sash; and another apparatus for an ornamented carriage wheel.”

Panopticon
construction
and principles.

But the building to receive these machines had also to be constructed. A sort of Panopticon had actually been built at Cricheff; but the one now proposed was to be on a far larger scale, and adapted to the reception of machinery. To diminish the danger of fire, iron was to be employed to a great extent. Above all, the construction must depend upon the principles of punishment intended to be carried out. Jeremy in his letter of 1786 had spoken of *solitary* confinement: his brother was averse to this. His notion was that even the restraints should be as little apparent as possible: he would use strong iron casements instead of barred windows: he thought that the less vicious convicts, and perhaps the more vicious, would have a better chance of reformation when considerately treated. Both brothers agreed that the convicts should be encouraged to work by the payment of regular wages:

part to be received by them at once, and the other part at the termination of their sentence. They would also offer them employment at low wages on their release. No claim can be set up for anything wonderful or original in these proposals, at a time when Howard had horrified the world with his accounts of the disgraceful condition of English prisons. We have not yet decided the controversies as to solitary and separate and associated systems; as to Captain Maconochie and Colonel Jebb's views; as to Sir Walter Crofton and his Irish system: nor have we decided whether punishment should be inflicted principally for the good of society, or immediately for the reformation of the criminal; whether example, or reformation, or mere retribution, should be the object directly proposed. That the two brothers should differ in opinion is not wonderful.

While Jeremy was carrying on that negotiation with government, which cost him years of labour and anxiety, Samuel's thoughts reverted to his original and cherished pursuit. He put himself in communication with the Admiralty. He saw that the introduction of steam power and saw-mills would much lessen the cost of shipbuilding; and his regular dockyard education, his Russian success, and his acquaintance with naval men of the highest rank, made it easy for him to secure the attention of the authorities.

1794. æt. 37.
At the
Admiralty.

Early in 1795, after several interviews with the Lords of the Admiralty, he arranged with them that he should address them by letter, asking permission to visit the royal dockyards, with reference to im-

1795, æt. 38.
Abandons the
Russian for
the British
Service.

provements he had suggested in conversation. The next day, he received the permission; and was informed that the Navy Board had had instructions to facilitate his proceedings. An ordinary inventor and projector would have been coldly received by the Admiralty, although he might have been as able as Bentham: for men in power have as much difficulty in selecting from the crowd of pretenders the one man of real merit, as all of us find in picking out the just claimant from the host of mendicants who harass us. Colonel Bentham had no painful experience of neglect. His schemes were cheerfully listened to: the dockyards were thrown open to him: a strong desire was expressed, that he would enter the king's service: there was before him the very career which he had dreamed of as a boy; for which he had prepared himself by working with his own hands at shipbuilding; and for which he had originally visited the Continent. That visit, to be sure, had lasted twelve years; and his success in continental society had all but turned him into the husband of a Russian heiress; had actually made him a Russian Brigadier-General, and had given him the rewards of a hard fought naval victory. After looking on this picture and on that, he deliberately chose the less brilliant but more patriotic alternative: he abandoned the favour of the Czarina, the patronage of Potemkin, the foreign honours, emoluments, and troops of friends, within his reach; and sat down to the comparatively obscure task of improving the naval service of England.

We have seen that in the management of Prince

Potemkin's establishments on the Black Sea, General Bentham had been far from successful. He now entered on the task of English dockyard reform. But the circumstances were more favourable. On the Dnieper, he had to build ships without artificers; to carry on manufactures without artisans; to manage natives with the aid of dishonest foreigners. He failed where no one could have succeeded. His retreat had been covered by a brilliant naval victory, gained partly through his dash and stubborn courage, but more by his daring disregard of rules in arming tiny vessels with monster guns. At Portsmouth he had skilled workmen, systematic if incomplete supervision, and comparative honesty. He had besides, what is necessary to the success of most ardent projectors and reformers, sharp eyes watching every movement, and a controlling power strong enough to restrain him. In most business, public or private, to secure great success, there must be two elements, the enterprising and the conservative: the one to push forward, the other to moderate. The junior partner, the radical reformer, the parliamentary orator, left to themselves, may display talent, zeal, generosity: but wanting the guidance and restraint of experience and timidity, they ruin all persons concerned, by fearlessness of consequences and ignorance of the world.

The Navy Board furnished Colonel Bentham's restraint. It could not be expected that he would love his overseer; no more than the team could be expected to love their driver. It was the Lords of the Admiralty who favoured Colonel Bentham, who adopted his inventions, and gave him employment.

1795, æt. 38.
How employed by
Admiralty.

The Navy
Board.

The Navy Board was subordinate to the Admiralty, and was instructed by them to set Bentham to work. This Board as well as that for Victualling, was not abolished till the Reform Bill era, when Sir James Graham put an end to both.*

1795, æt. 38.
Builds seven
small vessels.

One of the most important matters which Colonel Bentham had urged on the Admiralty, was the imperfection of naval architecture: he had explained how he thought vessels might be built cheaper and stronger. He was now authorized to build seven small vessels, entirely after his own devices, uncontrolled by board or dockyard officer. He laid them down much longer and sharper than usual; and to save oak timber which was then particularly scarce and dear, he used pine for some parts inside, and beech or elm for other parts which were constantly under water, and therefore not exposed to alternations of wet and dryness. Water-tight compartments were also introduced, and many other striking alterations. Lady Bentham in a later part of her memoir,† states the services performed by each of these vessels in various parts of the world.

1796, æt. 39.
Was made
Inspector-
General.

At first General Bentham was not appointed to any specific office. A Sultan, or a Czar, might have displaced the Comptroller of the Navy in his favour: happily, as I believe, for him, the regulated service of England, and respect for the just expectations of the officers employed, prevented any revolutionary measures. A new post was now created; that of Inspector-General of Naval Works: the duty being to “consider of all improvements in relation to the

* Blackwood: Article, April, 1863.

† Biography, pp. 163, 164.

building, fitting out, arming, navigating, and victualing, ships of war, and other vessels of war employed in H. M. Service; as well as in relation to the Docks, Slips, Basins, Buildings, and other articles appertaining to H. M.'s Naval Establishment." The salary of £2000 a year had been spoken of; with the approbation of Lord Spencer: but this was not to be got: it was fixed at £750 a year, to appease the jealousy of the Commissioners of the Navy, who had each of them £800 a year; and a special addition of £500 a year was made in consideration of General Bentham's peculiar qualifications. He accepted this inferior rank and moderate salary, though Russia still held out her arms to him.

Having this settled provision, he married the eldest daughter of Dr. George Fordyce. His wife entered with zest into all his schemes: aided him with her pen: kept a journal of his doings: and after his lamented death zealously maintained his reputation. If in doing this, she attributed to him something more than his due, that excess may claim a ready pardon; and the more ready, because when convinced of her error she silently withdrew the claim.

1796, æt. 39.
Married.

In the following year, much use was made of Bentham's services, and in the mode most likely to produce useful results. With *carte blanche*, as he would have had under Potemkin, he might have been tempted to try a multitude of experiments, with over-haste: at Portsmouth he was under restrictions which galled him no doubt, but which gave thoroughness, and therefore success, to his plans. The masonry for docks may serve as an

1797, æt. 40.
Various
works
recom-
mended in
writing.

example. He found that the clay of Portsmouth was capable of bearing any amount of brickwork; yet that the custom prevailed of driving long piles: that as a result, the clay, naturally impervious to water, was disturbed, and springs of water were admitted from below. He recommended the discontinuance of the pile driving, as something worse than a waste of labour. The floors of the docks had been constructed of wood, a costly and perishable material: he recommended inverted arches of masonry. The Navy Board, and the Comptroller, and the Surveyors of the Navy, were all against him. Their objections were always sent to him by the Admiralty: he was required to answer them in *writing*; a tedious process, but one of which the value has been recognized since the time of Queen Elizabeth. He himself confessed that the labour was not altogether lost; “since, *perhaps for the first time*, it brought each work to the test of accurate data, and of specific reasons.” It would be interesting to know what modifications his proposals underwent in the course of discussion. His widow tells us that no proposal of his was rejected: but that, of course, is true only of his proposals after this discussion. One thing I admire: the patient zeal of the Lords of the Admiralty, who submitted to this laborious mode of getting at the truth, in place of the more agreeable but less exhaustive mode of personal communication.

Steam
engine intro-
duced.

A favourite scheme was the introduction of steam power. The mortar-mills General Bentham had made, were worked by horses: the use of any considerable machinery was impossible without other

motive force. There were obstinate prejudices. "Steam engines would fire the yards; the artisans would resist the use of machinery: a time of war was an unfit one for hazardous experiments." An engine had been ordered for erection at Redbridge, where the seven experimental vessels had been built: but Bentham's zeal had outstripped that of the foundry; and the vessels having been completed before the engine, its erection had been deferred. He now proposed to apply it to working some new pumps required for the Portsmouth docks: in spite of opposition he succeeded.

During two years more, he went on with suggestions of mechanical improvements. In 1798, he entered on a course which was certain to subject him to the ill-will of his colleagues, even to a much greater degree than his previous efforts. As yet, he had only proposed to apply scientific procedure to old-fashioned mechanical appliances: he now took in hand the accounts, and modes of remuneration, and apparent abuses. Hitherto he had been disliked, "for thinking himself so clever:" henceforth he would be detested, "for thinking himself so good."

1798, æt. 41.
Reforms in
manage-
ment.

The House of Commons had appointed a Select Committee on Finance: and Charles Abbot, the Bentham's half-brother,* had been made Chairman. Abbot, later in life, was a partisan of Church and King; but his politics never prevented him from being an administrative reformer. Not many years after this Committee had reported, he introduced the

House of
Commons'
committee.
Charles
Abbot.

* I say half-brother, as the nearest appellation I know.

first Act for taking the Census;* and long after his Tory zeal had widely separated his politics from those of Jeremy Bentham, the old jurist expressed his confidence in Abbot's administrative excellence, by desiring that the administration would send him out to India as Governor-General.

Concerts affairs with Charles Abbot.

Charles Abbot and General Bentham then, consulted together as to the best mode of proceeding: they agreed that the Committee should call on General Bentham for "an account of the works in the department of the Inspector-General of Naval Works,"—"with any other observations explanatory of the above matters." This precept was sent through the Admiralty. Bentham and his wife laboured diligently to render the accounts: they soon heard that the public officers generally were alarmed; and that with regard to naval affairs, "The Admiralty and the Navy Board were at daggers drawn." Bentham received no advice from Lord Spencer; nor from his Lady, who was as much a part of the Admiralty as Lady Bentham of the Inspector-Generalship.

Anger of the officials.

Colonel Bentham delivered his accounts and his letter to the Chairman of the House of Commons' Committee; and sent a copy of each to the Admiralty. Then came such an explosion of anger as might have been expected. "He was blameable for sending in the report: he must get it back again." He applied to Abbot: he could not have it back. Should he

* A *Bill* had been brought in half a century before, but had been lost, through the influence, it is said, of the Bench of Bishops. Statisticians have reason to regret this bigotry, which has left the Census of Sweden the only important one of last century.

apply to the Secretary of the Committee? that would be useless. Lord Spencer however, praised the report, after sitting up all night to read it: though Mr. Nepean, the Secretary of the Admiralty, and even Lord Spencer, thought that General Bentham had gone too fast. I suspect that in fact, his zeal had overmastered his prudence. But for Lord Spencer's earnest desire to improve the service, the results might have been untoward; but his respect for General Bentham soon overcame his resentment. The Navy Board however, could not forgive the exposure: from this time there was open war.

During the next six years, General Bentham collected facts with reference to the Constitution of the Board; hoping to get it remodelled altogether, by getting rid of incompetent members, by simplifying the accounts, and by introducing individual responsibility. I do not propose to relate all the services which are enumerated by his biographer. His proposals were met as usual, by opposition from the Navy Board, and support from the Lords of the Admiralty. There was an unusual amount of rancour in the year 1804, caused by some proceedings with regard to the supply of timber. It cannot be doubted that there had been fraud and peculation in the affairs superintended by the Navy Board: for otherwise the Admiralty would not have used the strong language which appears in one of their letters; when they speak of "the negligence, fallacy, and fraud which had pervaded and been fostered by the department under their direction."

A striking example is given of this negligence on one side and fraud on the other. It was the

1798 to 1804,
æt. 41 to 47.
Continued
reforms.

custom of the yard to allow the workmen to carry away the chips as a perquisite. In trades which allow the counting out a certain number of pieces of timber of fixed measurement (felloes and spokes of a wheel, for example), the chips may safely be left to the artisan. But this was not the case in the dockyards: and we are reminded of the annoyance felt by the frugal Emperor Napoleon, when a boy at the Tuileries who was making a great bonfire, explained that he did it for the sake of the ashes, which were a perquisite of his father. How much wood would be cut up in our yards, not carelessly, but with wanton care, for the purpose of increasing the chips!

General Bentham, on a visit to Portsmouth, "took up his abode close to the dockyard gates; where, without its being noticed by the artificers, he could see the bundles of chips brought out, and many of them opened for sale in a kind of market held below his windows. As it was winter, he professed to like an addition of wood to his coal fire. In this way, bundles were frequently obtained, which, on putting the pieces together, showed that a whole deal had been cut up to reduce it to the greatest length allowed, three feet; or perhaps, even still more valuable oak planks or oak timber had been thus cut up. This practice of allowing chips, had its influence on the construction of secondrate houses in Portsea and its vicinity; stairs were just under three feet wide; doors, shutters, cupboards, and so forth, were formed of wood in pieces just under three feet long." How many bonfires for the sake of the ashes!

In the year 1803, an application was made to the Admiralty by Mr. Brunel, for a remuneration of his services, and a reimbursement of his private expenses, in constructing the celebrated Block-Machinery. The request was referred to General Bentham. It was not till six years later that a settlement was made: delay having probably been caused by General Bentham's absence from England in 1805-6-and 7; and partly by the fact that the machinery was not in full work till 1809. But he at once, in 1803, reported on the principle which, as he thought, should be adopted.

1803, æt. 46.
Estimated
payment of
Brunel for
Block
Machinery.

This principle had long been a subject of reflection with him. He saw with regret that government officials had seldom been expressly rewarded for improvements effected; though persons outside were amply remunerated for similar improvements by obtaining contracts. He was convinced that this distinction was a great discouragement to the inventive zeal of the service. We can all believe that a junior officer would be snubbed by his superiors for troubling them with novelties, in the numerous cases where the superiors were oldfashioned men of conscientious routine. To overcome this *vis inertiae*, as well as to render justice to official inventors, General Bentham thought it would be right that "the amount of compensation should be proportioned to the amount of benefit derived from the use of the invention:" thus putting the inventor to some extent on the same footing as if he had taken out a patent. In this case, one year's savings were to be the amount of remuneration.

Principle
proposed.

It seems to me greatly to the credit of the Lords

Amount
ultimately
paid.

of the Admiralty, (and indeed their dealings with General Bentham generally, were much to their credit,) that they assented to this principle in assessing Brunel's remuneration: this too, at a time when, though the peace of Amiens had given a short breathing-time, yet the unaccustomed weight of taxation must have kept up a constant struggle between the Treasury and the Board. When the final settlement was to be made, Brunel furnished accounts, showing an estimated annual saving of £21,000. The papers were sent through the Navy Board to General Bentham: he found by the report of a clerk, that the savings might be regarded as either £7,000 or £13,000, according to the prices paid to one or to another contractor. Such loose estimates would not do, and he found it necessary to make for himself exact and elaborate calculations. After several months, he was able to report that the annual savings amounted to £16,621: a sum considerably lower than Mr. Brunel's claim, but far above the lowest estimate made by the clerk employed. This sum was accordingly paid.

The fairness
of Brunel's
claim.

General Bentham, in thus disallowing a portion of Brunel's claim, carefully guarded himself against any reflection on his honour. In his private journal he says, "he has made out his accounts with every appearance of the fairest, most honourable intentions; he has given lumping sums *against* himself, but he has taken no advantage without stating it."

Profit to the
country.

It is gratifying to find from these elaborate calculations, that the Admiralty had great reason to be content with the invention. "The capital sunk for buildings and machinery had been so far

liquidated, that the remaining outstanding debt* (exclusive of Mr. Brunel's remuneration) would be paid off by the next October; that including that remuneration, the whole cost of the block manufactory would be liquidated in the following year; the principal and interest, and all attendant expenses, having then been paid by the profits of the concern."

While General Bentham was making these elaborate calculations to determine the amount of Brunel's remuneration, he had been reminded that the savings effected were partly owing to the machines which he had made, and had removed from Westminster. He waived however, all claims of his own, and cheerfully surrendered them to Brunel, in consideration of his services to himself in forwarding his plans, and selecting fit workpeople. This was the more disinterested, because there had been at one time a coolness between the two, caused by an alleged disposition on the part of Brunel to appropriate to himself, in the eyes of visitors, too large a share of the credit of the machinery.

1803, æt. 46.
Bentham's
and Brunel's
machinery.

We have already seen that at an early period of General Bentham's life, while journeying in Russia, he had been struck with the waste of power in working wood by hand; and had written to his friends at home about the possibility of substituting machines. The same notion had probably occurred to a hundred or a thousand persons before. Anyone can imagine mechanical improvements: few can effect them. On his return to England in 1790, he

Bentham's
machinery.

* By debt here I understand the profits still required to replace the outlay with interest added. It was a debt in a double-entry sense.

found by inspection that England was particularly backward in wood-working; probably in consequence of the exhaustion of her forests long before. The next year he took out his first patent; which was followed by a second two years later, and by a third in 1795. The machines were made of full working size, and the first intention was to set them to work with a steam-engine at the family house in Queen-square Place. Then came Jeremy's Panopticon Prison Scheme, into which the machines were to be dovetailed: so the Queen-square Place steam-engine was abandoned. Samuel then, reverted to his first love; and engaging himself to the Admiralty as a naval architect and reformer, removed his machines to Portsmouth, where at last they were set to work.

Brunel's
machinery
invented.

But for the mechanical genius of a French emigrant, this might have been the limit of naval wood-machinery for that generation. Marc Isambert Brunel,* afterwards knighted by the king, had left his native town of Rouen, and had gone to the United States. There, at the table of General Hamilton, Washington's celebrated secretary, afterwards killed by Aaron Burr, a conversation led Brunel to conceive the possibility of making ships' blocks by machinery; and subsequently, while treading the esplanade of Fort Montgomery, the idea of the "shaping-machine" occurred to him. He came over to England, labouring under the difficulty, often a fatal one to an inventor, of not being himself a mechanic; but he found in Maudesley, then a London artisan, working with one assistant, a man competent to seize his ideas and construct his machines.

* Beamish's Life of Brunel.

Brunel experienced the usual obstacles in getting his invention into use; though he had the assistance of the Under-Secretary to the Navy-Board, Mr. Kingdom, his wife's brother. Fox and Taylor, the contractors for blocks, unfortunately for themselves, declined the offer made to them after the patent was secured in 1801. Lord Spencer was still First Lord of the Admiralty; and to him Brunel then applied, with a letter of introduction from the United States. Lady Spencer made him acquainted with General Bentham. If Bentham had been a selfish man, or even if he had been a man of ordinary temper, he would have left Brunel to fight his own battle; he would not have adopted and fostered the schemes of a rival: but he saw the superiority of the new machines over his own; and he subordinated his own wishes to the good of the service.

Brought into
use by
Bentham.

Mr. Beamish does him full justice. After stating his successes in Russia, and his anxiety to introduce machinery into British dock-yards, he says,* "With regard to the special improvement now proposed by Brunel, the very position occupied by Bentham might have proved the greatest impediment to its success. Bentham was himself an inventor and mechanist of the highest distinction. He had already conceived a system of machinery for making blocks."—But, "rising far above professional vanity and official jealousy, and consulting only his country's benefit, he no sooner became satisfied of the superiority of Brunel's inventions, than he at once abandoned his own less perfect conceptions, and with a candour worthy of all praise, he did not

Bentham's
disinterest-
edness.

* Beamish's Brunel, 52, 54.

delay an hour to forward Brunel's application to the Admiralty; thus seeking in a noble and generous spirit to reflect upon French genius some of that honour and protection which he had himself experienced when a sojourner in a foreign land."

Rival claims
of Bentham
and Brunel.

Mr. Beamish states in this passage, that Bentham abandoned his own less perfect conceptions; and this might be taken to mean that his machines which he had brought from Queen-square Place, were all thrown aside. This was not so: they were to a great extent retained, and Brunel's machines were used to finish the blocks which were begun with Bentham's machines. This erroneous estimate of the rival inventors, was caused by Bentham's carelessness about his own reputation, when it might be in conflict with the good of the service.

Bentham's
claims, why
under-rated.

He was bent on getting machinery generally introduced into the yards: he thought this might best be done, by exhibiting to all comers the results in a particular instance. He arranged the block machinery in the manner best adapted to this purpose: we have all heard the exhibition praised by visitors; and Brunel's block machinery has become proverbial. At first Brunel was himself the showman; and apparently was guilty of some vanity and some ingratitude in the display. He overlooked his obligations to his generous superior in office, and forgot to mention that much of the wood-machinery used in the yard was not his own. General Bentham felt himself wronged; and some coolness followed between the inventors. He could say* late

* *Mechanics' Magazine*, 1495, 273, 2.

in life, that though the course he had pursued caused a general opinion that Brunel was the sole inventor of the machinery, "however his credit may have been affected in consequence of such an opinion, he felt no regret in reflecting on any part of his conduct in this transaction." We have already seen that this consciousness of ill treatment did not warp his mind when the question of remuneration was referred to him: but that he first recommended the principle that a public servant should be rewarded in proportion to the savings he effected; and that, when this principle was adopted, and the calculation of one year's savings was referred to him, he worked out the sum with laborious exactness, and obtained for his rival a far larger remuneration than was awarded by the clerk employed, besides carefully exonerating Brunel from any possible suspicion of unfairness in his demands.

It is unfortunate that Lady Bentham should at one time have taken an exaggerated view of her late husband's merits; and should have grudged Brunel the credit of being the real inventor of the block machinery. But though this is unfortunate, it is perfectly natural and pardonable. She knew that General Bentham had done for the public service, many things of as great importance as the one improvement effected by Brunel: yet she found the Frenchman's name in everyone's mouth, while her husband's name was unknown. She rebelled against the caprice of fortune: and she nursed her just anger till she became unjust.

Lady
Bentham's
claims for
her husband.

Several notices of the Portsmouth improvements appeared of late years, in numbers of the *Mechanics'*

Where made.

Magazine.* At last, in No. 1495, April 3rd, 1852, Lady Bentham spoke out strongly. It happened that in the autumn of the same year, at the meeting of the British Association, at Belfast, a paper† was communicated by the “Portsmouth and Portsea Literary and Philosophical Society,” in which the block machinery was ascribed to Brunel. It was there erroneously stated that the machinery was constructed in London, and removed to Portsmouth. In correcting this mistake Lady Bentham‡ attributes to her late husband more than belonged to him: since anyone reading the article, would suppose from it that his machinery was that which was ultimately adopted. The author of the Portsmouth paper replied§ to these strictures, that no one before had disputed Brunel’s claims; but he did not deny the error alleged as to the construction of the machines in London.

Real ground
of complaint.

General Bentham, no doubt, had reason to complain. We have seen that he thought Brunel himself had publicly engrossed all the credit, part of which was not his due. Bentham, as we have seen, had arranged the machinery dramatically; for the purpose of creating in the minds of the spectators a conviction of its capabilities, and a desire for its extension. His own saws and other comparatively common implements, had remained in the background. His generosity in placing a rival inventor before himself, his self-sacrificing voluntary eclipse, were known only at the Navy Board where he was

* *Mechanics’ Magazine*, 1323, 1367, 1427, 1487.

† *Statistical Journal*, 16, 201. ‡ *Ib.*, 16, 359. § *Ib.*, 17, 25.

hated; and to the Lords of the Admiralty, no part of whose duty was to blazon his praises abroad; and who indeed carelessly imbibed the common notion,* and during General Bentham's subsequent absence in Russia, wrote to the navy-yard about "Brunel's" circular saws, but had their error corrected by Mr. Goodrich. There followed the inevitable result; that the world attributed everything to Brunel; and that even in works of authority, such as the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, *Ure's Dictionary*, and *Fincham's History of Naval Architecture*, the error was repeated.†

The facts then are these:—that Colonel Bentham conceived and actually constructed certain machines for working wood; and anyone who doubts this may satisfy himself, by referring to the evidence given before a Committee of the House of Commons in 52 George III: § that these machines were something more than mere saws and rasping implements, and were adapted to the making of blocks, as may be known by reading the specifications of his patents: that Sir Isambert Brunel's machines were his own, made quite independently of Bentham's, and not even suggested by his. We have the evidence of Abbott, Bentham's near relation and intimate friend,‡ that such was the truth. Lady Bentham herself, was so convinced by the arguments adduced, that in her *Biography of her husband*, published so lately as 1862, she quietly dropped the claims she had set up.

Conclusion
as to facts.

* *Mechanics' Magazine*, 1495, 274.

† *Ib.*, 264.

‡ *Mechanics' Magazine*, 1495, 275. § *Lord Colchester's Diary*, 3, 348.

B's principle
of remunera-
tion.

I have already pointed out the principle on which Brunel's remuneration was calculated. He received the profits realized by the government during a year. The general adoption of such a scale of reward would no doubt, greatly sharpen the wits of subordinates. It would be unnecessary, and it would be unfair, to assign to them the fourteen years' profit which, as it might seem, they would have earned by keeping their inventions as private property. In Brunel's case, after once the patent had been secured, and a small working model had been made, most of the expenses and nearly all the risk of loss, fell upon the government. The machinery was commenced in 1802, but was not quite completed till 1808: how could Brunel have held on during these seven years if left to himself? He had been snubbed by the contractors. He might perhaps have found some capitalist to take the matter up; but in that case only a small part of the profit would have gone to the inventor. A year's clear gains therefore, seem to have been a handsome remuneration; and consistent with the principle laid down by General Bentham, that an inventor who determined to devote himself to the service of the government should be no loser by that decision.

Allowance
for interest
on outlay.
The principle
in private
affairs.

Another of his principles is well worthy of attention. He maintained that interest of money ought to be taken into account, in many cases where it is neglected. The principle indeed, on which interest ought to be charged, is not altogether a simple one; and it is one involved in many common affairs. In my boyhood, I heard an old

gentleman speak of a family portrait as having cost him £200; though the artist's price had been perhaps £10. He proved his assertion thus. I had the alternative of that picture or a legacy of £25; I chose the picture: that was forty-two years ago; and the legacy at compound interest would now have amounted to £200: the picture therefore has cost me £200. As he lived to be a very old man, he probably rated it at £1000 before he died. With such tricks of arithmetic, one may prove anything.

An application of the principle has been made to municipal affairs. In municipal affairs. In a manner similar, though not the same. A corporation bought a large plot of land for the purpose of street improvements. It cost £40,000, and possession could not be had till the termination of leases having 14 years to run. It was contended that when the corporation came into possession, the land had cost £80,000, by the addition of compound interest. An opponent pointed to the adjacent Town Hall:—that building cost £100,000, 28 years ago: adding compound interest it has now cost £400,000; and in another generation will have cost a million and a half. A certain church, built 100 years ago, has now cost five millions.

A satisfactory reply however, has been given to these absurdities of Cocker. The gentleman who sacrificed £25 to secure his father's portrait, at once hung it up in his house, and derived from it such filial pleasure as the picture was capable of giving. The cost of it should be reckoned only from the time it was hung up. We should think it absurd for an old man to assert that every bottle of wine he bought

when he was twenty, had cost him £5; and on cross-examination to explain that he had added compound interest. That addition may be made by a man who buys new port wine at 30s., and keeps it 14 years; and he may say that it has cost him 60s. Now the corporation plot of land was bought to keep: it was not at once available. It may be fairly estimated therefore, to have cost £40,000, plus interest during 14 years.

Applied by
Bentham.

The Town Hall however, furnishes the most exact illustration of General Bentham's views. Suppose it had been five years in building, and that each year, £20,000 had been laid out. Reckoning from the year it was opened for use, the £20,000 laid out in the first year may fairly be charged with interest for four years: the £20,000 laid out in the second year may fairly be charged with interest for three years: the third year's outlay with interest for two years; and the fourth year's outlay with interest for one year. The Hall therefore, may be said to have cost £100,000 + 4000 + 3000 + 2000 + 1000; making an addition for interest of £10,000 in all.

For municipal purposes, the calculation of the cost of the plot of land has a real significance: that of the Hall has none. But the principle, as applied to Government works, some of which are very long in completion, has a considerable value: and this appears more obvious as to periods of war; when the sums expended are not taken at once from the taxpayers, who might be supposed to save the amount from their expenditure, but when the sums are borrowed and an annual charge of interest is incurred.

General Bentham early in his career at Portsmouth, took this principle into his calculations. He had been required to give his advice as to the construction of a mast-pond.* One was in progress, and it was estimated that it would cost £189,000 to complete it: he proposed a substitute, which was estimated by the same officer to cost only £18,000. "This mast-pond is one among many examples of habitual extravagance in beginning many works at the same time, and carrying them on simultaneously, by little and little, year after year. The mast-pond in question, if continued in the same manner in which it had already been carried on for some years, could not in that mode, by the greatest possible expedition, have been completed in less than 31 years. At the end of that period the cost of the work, as it would appear in the books, would have been simply the £195,495;† but during those 31 years interest would be paid upon the money yearly sunk upon it. He had caused a good accountant to calculate how much that interest would amount to, taking it at 5 per cent. . . . It appeared that the real cost of the work . . . would have amounted to no less than £458,568. But, . . . taking as a standard the present rate of progress, it would not have been completed in less than 176 years; consequently the cost, together with interest and compound interest would have amounted to the enormous sum of 132 millions sterling." The General was evidently a disciple of Dr. Price, whom as author of Pitt's Sinking-Fund, it has been the

* Biography, 134.

† Apparently £6,495 had already been spent.

fashion of late years to ridicule; by men who, as I think, do not understand either Pitt or Dr. Price.

Another application of the principle is not so obviously true. So late as 1827, there arose a question as to the advantages which the service had derived from the office which General Bentham had held. This led to a calculation of the results of certain mills for the manufacture of sheathing. "It appeared that on the 1st January, 1812, the capital sunk on the metal mills had been all of it, by degrees, paid off by the profits of the mills, together with all interest and compound interest on that capital, as well as all debts of every kind; that there then remained in hand, in money and money's worth, upon the premises, to the value of £68,215.

. . . . This sum was then taken as *if* it had been put out to interest from that time *to the end of* 1827, for the purpose of creating a fund for the re-establishment of that office: when the capital and interest upon it, compounded half-yearly, were found to amount to £1,257,615. The salaries of the Inspector-General of Navy Works and of the officers of that office amounted to £3,000 a year; a perpetual annuity to that amount purchased in the 3 per cent. Consols, at the then price (85 per cent.) would have cost £255,000; so that the metal mills had not only provided for the re-establishment of that office in perpetuity, but had, besides, created a surplus of above a million." It seems to me a trick of useless application of arithmetic to calculate savings with compound interest to a subsequent period. In this way the million surplus, would by the year 1870 amount to eight millions: and

a hundred years later to more than our 800 millions of National Debt.

General Bentham's maxims* are worth repeating; as being founded on the long experience and anxious thought of a zealous and capable man.

Maxims as to
Public
Works.

"1st. That no work should be undertaken that will not produce an advantage equivalent to the expense it occasions.

"2ndly. That the advantage of a work may in all cases be measured by a yearly value in money, generally *arithmetically* demonstrable, when otherwise capable of easy estimation.

"3rdly. That it is not worth while to sink a capital on any public work, unless the yearly value of it, when obtained, be equal to 8 per cent. on the capital sunk,—that is, 5 per cent. for the simple average interest of the money sunk, and 3 per cent. to compensate for wear and tear of the work, together with the chance of its utility being superseded by some of the many circumstances which, at a future time, render works comparatively less perfect or less needful than at the time of their construction."

Another leading notion of General Bentham was that individual responsibility should be made the rule of the service as far as possible. He was dissatisfied when he saw his great enemy, the Navy Board, sheltering itself from attack, by declaring its resolutions the work of the majority, to which each member of the board was bound to submit, and for which no one member was responsible.

Individual
responsi-
bility.

* Biography, 317.

Coöperation is an excellent practice, but the most excellent things are capable of abuse. It is unnecessary to enlarge on this topic, because there is no difference of opinion upon it. Whenever a department of government becomes important, there is immediately a demand in Parliament that some member of the administration should represent and defend it. The education committee of the Privy Council has its representative: so has the Poor Law Board; and if the railways passed into the hands of government, there would be a representative of the railway-board. No doubt, this arrangement is an imperfect one; because most of the measures are really prepared by the permanent secretaries, while the political secretary earns the credit and the censure. Perhaps it would be more just if he neither suffered the punishment nor received the praise. Individual responsibility is, no doubt, a practice much to be desired.

1805, æt. 48.
Hatred of B.
by Navy
Board: why.

I have mentioned more than once that there was much ill feeling between General Bentham and the Navy Board. The causes are obvious. The great reformer was no adventurer, whose needs or whose follies, would soon condemn him: he was no self-seeker, to be bought by money or flattery: he was no ignoramus with nostrums inapplicable to the service. He was an educated and polished gentleman; who like a very unpolished Czar of Muscovy two centuries earlier, had himself laid down the timbers of a ship, and had handled the adze and the caulking-iron: he had an enthusiastic temper and a constant will: he had unflagging zeal, tempered by the experience of failures abroad. He was as

dangerous an enemy as fancy could have invented.

His early friendships with officers who had risen to the highest rank, had procured him a commission to build some vessels on plans of his own: an office had been created for him, and a large salary had been attached to it expressly on his behalf. The office had been that of Fault-Finder-General, and he had shown great alacrity in its exercise: by his exposures he had deprived the town of the opportunities of obtaining building-timber under the plausible designation of chips: by a combination with Mr. Abbot, he had furnished the House of Commons with accounts damnatory of naval management; and this had been done by a disregard of official subordination, offensive even to the true reformers Mr. Nepean and Lord Spencer.

Finally, in 1804, he had brought down upon the Navy Board the severe censures of the Admiralty, with reference to the purchase of timber. It is stated that up to a certain period, great looseness had prevailed in the manner of buying: the contractors having commonly been allowed to deliver less than the quantity stipulated, and that of an inferior quality. But new regulations had been made and new "timber-masters" had been appointed to inspect the deliveries. Disputes had arisen and the contractors had complained of over-strictness. I suspect that though the earlier system was bad, the loss to the service was not nearly so great as it seemed: that habitual contractors, knowing the premium which would be allowed them in the form of a relaxed scrutiny of their timber, took the contracts considerably lower. The practice however,

Purchasing
of timber.

was highly objectionable; because it facilitated bribery, and might shut out the competition of timber merchants who had no experience of the value of the premium, or who regarded the proceedings as dishonest.

On an appeal by the contractors to the Navy Board, the contract prices were advanced one-fourth: certain rules were relaxed; and an application was made by the Navy Board to the Admiralty, in favour of the contractors and against the new timber-masters. The Lords of the Admiralty took the part of the timber-masters; and in a severe letter rebuked the Board. They declared themselves convinced that the alleged "vexatious strictness and severity" had not been exercised: that the fault lay, "not in the minds of either the timber-masters or master-shipwrights, but in those who encouraged a recurrence to the former system of receiving timber, which however beneficial to the contractors, was ruinous to the public:" they regretted that the Navy Board should show a desire to return to the former system, under which the receiving officers were in practice the agents of the timber merchants: they commented on "the negligence, fallacy, and fraud, which had pervaded and been fostered by the department under the direction" of the Board.

General Bentham had not been even aware that such a letter was intended: Lady Bentham regrets its having been written; believing that the irritation it caused was injurious. My own long experience of Government officials, makes me suspect that it was unjust. Timber is a commodity the quality of which it is not easy to determine. The timber-masters

must of necessity have been either themselves artisans, or dependent upon the skill and judgment of others who were artisans. These men were all appointed to carry out a new system, the essence of which was increased strictness. Men of the artisan class are apt to run into extremes: these men in particular, had orders to be exact, and would certainly be over-exact. I feel convinced that if investigation were possible, the result would show over-precision on the part of the timber-masters: a fault unjust to the contractors, and as expensive to the service as the laxity of the former practice; because timber of too high a quality would be required, and contractors would demand an extravagant price to cover the losses of possible rejections.

Though General Bentham had not been concerned in this letter, it was he who had supplied the facts on which it was founded. The cup of irritation was now more than full, and his situation among his colleagues must have been extremely unpleasant; and we may be sure that no effort would be spared by them and their friends to get rid of him. A man who had great influence at the Admiralty, took leave of him soon afterwards, saying that for his part, though he had the highest opinion of Bentham's talents and zeal, yet he would vote him six thousand a year, to make sure of his never returning.

Result of
hostility of
Navy Board.

When an Emperor wishes to displace a great minister whom he fears to offend, he relegates* him

1805, æt. 48.
Sent to
Russia.

* This word is carelessly used in England in its secondary sense of banish: I use it here in the sense it has when the French say that the Parliament of Paris was relegated to Amiens. This is limited or specific banishment to one place.

to an embassy. General Bentham was relegated to Archangel. This was before the battle of Trafalgar had established our naval supremacy for the rest of the war. Twelve years of hostilities had caused the building of so many royal vessels, that suitable timber had become extremely scarce and dear; and yet the union of the continental navies under Napoleon, threatened our security, if we failed to make head against them all. It was determined, with the permission of Alexander, to get some ships built for us in Russia: and of all living men the fittest to superintend their construction was General Bentham; who had been apprenticed in a royal dockyard, who had had long experience of managing workmen, who had lived much abroad, and was intimately acquainted with Russian habits. No conceivable appointment could have been more easily justified.

Difficulties.

All may have been done in perfectly good faith: there is good ground however, for suspecting that the getting rid of Bentham was the real object proposed. The General was received most cordially at Cronstadt and St. Petersburg: but when he desired to commence operations, he found that he had come on a fool's errand. Though the subject of building English ships of war at Archangel had been mentioned, and the proposal had been received by the Russian authorities with diplomatic courtesy, yet no precise arrangement had been made, and no specific consent even had been given.

Arrangement
refused by
Alexander.

Bentham used all his personal influence; and succeeded thus far with the Minister of the Marine: that he should be permitted to construct vessels of war, provided that they should all be built in

couples, one of each couple to be taken by Russia, the other by England: thus giving to the Russian navy all the advantages of English science and of Bentham's singular ingenuity. No higher compliment could have been paid him. This arrangement was of course subject to the approval of the Czar, and that approval was refused. Anxiety and vexation threw the zealous Englishman into a severe fit of illness.

To inquiries as to the cause of Alexander's refusal, it had been answered that the cause was not personal but political. Alexander had a certain sympathy with the genius and the designs of Napoleon; as was shown not long afterwards, by the celebrated Treaty of Tilsit (June, 1807): he was probably unwilling to anger the French Emperor by aiding the marine of England. However, to soothe Bentham and his government, he allowed the exportation to England, duty free, of the timber which had been bought: a concession of considerable importance.

Why?—concession made.

That the prohibition of ship building was not caused by dislike to General Bentham, was shown by a proposal that he should remain in Russia in the imperial service; and he got leave from home to defer his return for a few months. The only service he could render was the building of a panopticon at Ochta; which, for the sake of expedition, was constructed of wood. Russia was now on the point of war with England; but notwithstanding this, he was permitted to inspect the port of Revel, and to take notes of its condition: he had had a salary assigned him, higher than that of the imperial ministers, and paid monthly in advance. Lady

Personal favour.

Bentham takes credit to her husband for not having been won by these favours to remain abroad: I do not dispute his habitual disinterestedness; but I cannot think any additional proof of it is offered by the fact of his declining the service of a foreign enemy.

Return
1807, æt. 50.
Office
abolished.

After a protracted homeward voyage, General Bentham arrived at Harwich; and there received news that his office of Inspector-General was abolished, and that he was made one of the Commissioners of the Navy Board. Great events abroad, and new political combinations at home, had occurred during his absence. Nelson had fought and died at Trafalgar: Napoleon had conquered at Austerlitz: Pitt had rolled up the map of Europe and had died: Fox, after a brief administration had followed him: Perceval had succeeded Lord Henry Petty as Chancellor of the Exchequer. In these frequent changes of ministry, the under-secretaries and the Commissioners had most of the arrangements in their own hands, and General Bentham was displaced. This was done however, on the recommendation of the Committee of Inquiry; but, as was stated,* with the "expectation that by incorporating General Bentham with the Navy Board, he would be able to continue his former pursuits with less opposition."

1807—1812,
æt. 50—55.
Naval
projects.

During the next five years, he continued to be a Commissioner of the Navy. He was constantly consulted by the Admiralty as to naval works projected; and notwithstanding petty annoyances

* Biography, 254.

from his colleagues, and the coolness towards him of the present Lords of the Admiralty, he zealously urged his own views. He advocated the use of covered docks for rapid building of vessels; of houses for seasoning timber: of the adoption of the Isle of Grain as an Arsenal in preference to Northfleet. With regard to the celebrated work, the Plymouth Breakwater, he maintained, with Lord Spencer and Lord St. Vincent, that the money applied to it might be more usefully spent elsewhere; for having himself formerly projected such a work, his inquiries had convinced him that ships of the line were already as safe there as at Spithead or other good roadsteads. He would have preferred too, a floating breakwater, which, as he calculated, might have been constructed for little more than £200,000.

According to Lady Bentham:—* “Time has shown that Sir Samuel’s apprehensions have been verified. The breakwater which was scarcely needed has been constructed; it has not only covered the best anchoring ground; but Cansand Bay, which formerly afforded so much shelter, has been so much disturbed by the current now driven through it, that ships can no longer take refuge there. In bad weather merchant vessels have been driven upon the artificial rock and lost. The Sound is no longer a roadstead for ships seeking refuge in foul weather, since behind the breakwater vessels require to be piloted in, and when there, if numerous, they must be placed by a harbour-master. The long sea slope

* Biography, 289.

has proved incapable of resisting storms, so that £10,000 or £12,000 a year has been spent upon it for repair; and for the protection of the lighthouse, it has been necessary to have recourse to an upright wall at that part of the long slope."

1812, æt. 55.
Loses his
office.

The office now held by Sir Samuel Bentham, (in 1809 he had been received at court as a Knight of St. George) was that of Civil Architect and Engineer to the Navy Board. Suddenly, the office was abolished; and the Admiralty in announcing the fact to him, recommended him to apply for moderate compensation: and suggested that he might "offer his professional services to the public at large." It was thoughtless enough, though not meant as an insult, to talk to a man of fifty-five of beginning a career of private practice, after he had spent the prime of his life in the public service. Doubtless there were great rejoicings among the members of the Navy Board, and especially among the dull and sluggish ones: but as we have learnt all these transactions from Lady Bentham, who had herself played an important part in them, it is impossible for us to say how much of her husband's unpopularity resulted from his character as a naval reformer; and how far it might have been avoided by prudence and conciliation.

Possible
motives.

Lord Melville, the First Lord of the Admiralty, under whose signature Sir Samuel had received the notice of the abolition of his office, the suggestion of starting in life on his own account, and the advice to apply for a "proper and reasonable" compensation, was the son of Pitt's friend Dundas, who seven years before, previously to his impeachment,

had been censured by the House of Commons on Mr. Whitbread's motion. This motion against Lord Melville had been carried in the House of Commons, on the 8th of April, 1805,* by the casting vote of the Speaker, Abbot. In 1812, Abbot was still Speaker: he was also Sir Samuel's intimate friend, and all but his brother. Posterity may know, if they are inquisitive enough to search the private correspondence of these public men, whether in dismissing Sir Samuel Bentham, a wound was intended for Abbot. Sir Samuel himself must have been regarded as an antagonist; since he was the great naval reformer, from whom had been obtained at one period and another, facts and accounts showing the inefficiency of naval administration. Abbot and Bentham were the enemies of the naval race, and especially of the Dundas family. Lady Bentham however, expresses no suspicion of any vindictiveness on Lord Melville's part; and she could hardly have forgotten what were her husband's feelings at the time. She even says† that there cannot be a doubt of his lordship's sincere desire to secure ample compensation for the abolition of the office.

Pitt's friend, Lord Melville, was First Lord of the Admiralty at the time of the political attacks made on him; and it was for alleged malversation in the office of Treasurer of the Navy, that he was impeached. His son, made First Lord in 1812, stumbled at the threshold of his office, when he dismissed Bentham, the boldest and probably the most capable

Bad results.

* Lord Colchester's Diary, 1, 548.

† Biography, 297.

of the civil servants. The naval war, to be sure, was over as regards the Continental powers; and the United States marine had not risen to any formidable dimensions: yet the dockyard administration is always of the highest importance to England; and Bentham was the man to suggest the right measures for reducing the service to peace dimensions. Had he been consulted and trusted, as he would have been by Lord Spencer and Lord St. Vincent, we might have saved tens of millions sterling, and might have escaped the opprobrium which now attaches to the unsystematic and thriftless administration of our Admiralty.

Compensa-
tion.

To disappoint reasonable expectations, is not the ordinary practice of the British Government. Permanent officers, once appointed, receive only moderate salaries, but are in little danger of being displaced: and when the public service requires their removal, they are nearly sure to have compensation awarded them. Bentham urged that he had not been superseded through age, infirmity, or incapacity, but through the abolition of his office; and that this office he had held by patent.* Lord Melville himself, after some correspondence with Abbot, went beyond the terms of his original letter,† in which he suggested an “allowance to a proper and reasonable extent;” and declared that he “should not deem it just that Bentham’s income should be diminished.” It was found impossible however, to do this act of justice, without bringing in a Bill to amend the Superannuation Act: this Bill having been passed into an Act,

* Biography, 298.

† Ib., 296.

the compensation was fixed at £1,500 a year, which was the amount of the previous salary; subject however, to the usual deductions.

Sir Samuel had other claims upon the Government. His Russian mission had been set afoot in so hurried a manner, that the stipulations had not been recorded with official accuracy. A certain monthly allowance had been promised: the Navy Board, on settling his accounts, was pleased to reduce this by one-half: and therefore, while he claimed a balance of £5,308, the Board not only disallowed it, but actually made him a debtor to the extent of £816. So far did this misunderstanding go, that the Board threatened legal proceedings unless he paid up this £816. At last, after three years* from the date of his leaving office, and eight years from the date of his returning home from Russia, the Board had the mortification of having to pay over to him £3,467, being nearly £4,300 more than they maintained to be his due. At any rate they had had the gratification of long keeping him out of his money, and of irritating him with protracted discussions and threats.

Other pecuniary claims.

The £3,467 awarded, was less by £1,841 than he had claimed. Of this difference, more than £1,600 consisted of a charge he had made for interest, and apparently compound interest, during the years that the account had been litigated. No doubt, if the sum had been paid at first, it might have been invested, and the income might have been added to it, at compound interest; but all precedent was against the demand; and popular feeling is always adverse

Interest.

* Biography, 303.

to claims of interest. However strongly too, the justice of demands for interest is maintained by Sir Samuel's brother, in his Defence of Usury, the law was peremptory in forbidding the payment of more than 5 per cent., and strongly discouraged the practice of compound interest.

Extra services.

I have noticed in the case of Brunel's remuneration, that Sir Samuel had views of his own as to the principles on which servants of the Government ought to be rewarded. He had obtained for Brunel a sum of money far beyond an ordinary salary: he now hoped that he should himself be treated with equal liberality. He urged* that "the rewarding any extra and separate services so clearly beyond what are required by the tenor of an official appointment, as documents will show my services to have been, could not but prove highly beneficial to the public; since a public officer would thereby have grounds to hope that by exerting himself beyond the ordinary duties of his situation, he might obtain for his family some provision proportionate to what he might otherwise have realized had he employed the same exertions for his own private emolument."

Lord Melville did not dispute the statement that he had rendered zealous and effective services: on the subject of the Metal Mills, his lordship said to the Speaker, "there he stands upon a rock." But he objected that no additional reward could be given without an application to Parliament; and he found that the precedent would be "an awkward one." It was no doubt true, that General Bentham, when

* Biography, 301.

he sacrificed his brilliant Russian prospects, had been half promised a salary of £2,000, instead of the £1,500 paid him. It was equally true that his enthusiastic zeal, his peculiar accomplishments, and his disinterestedness, made him worth a dozen of the ordinary routine members of the Navy Board. But it is of the essence of salaries, that they should be partly calculated on the socialistic principle of regarding the needs of the man, not the services rendered. Everyone in England will confess the injustice of the arrangement: but no one has invented a machine for measuring services. Payment by merit, means unfortunately payment by favour: for each good natured head of a department will believe that his subordinate is more deserving than the subordinate of another department. In the absence of a service-meter, I fear that little justice will be done; and if this is the case now, still more difficult was the problem in the days of national distress and factious politics.

While these pecuniary claims were still unsettled, Sir Samuel took his family to France: partly to restore his health which had been damaged by zealous application; partly to get away from scenes of annoyance and disappointment; partly also to give his sons those advantages of early residence abroad, which he had himself found of great value. Louis XVIII had lately returned, and the French generally, either held their peace, or exhibited enthusiasm in favour of the English, who had restored their king. The family crossed to Havre, and travelling south, settled near Saumur.

1814, æt. 57.
To France.

There they were spectators of the expiring effort

The Hun-
dred Days.
1815, æt. 58.

of the great plebeian* Emperor. They saw the train laid by pedlars, real or disguised, who while selling their wares, vaunted the glory of the subjugated Empire: they heard ballads disparaging the king, and sneering at him as a potato-eater: then the sous-préfet of Saumur at a carnival ball had his hangings ornamented with the Napoleonic bee; while there arose on the one side hopes, on the other side anxiety and despondency. When the escape from Elba was announced, Sir Samuel carried his family as far as Tours: there they remained, till one night after Waterloo, they were awaked by the clatter on a distant bridge, of the carriage which contained the flying Emperor. At Tours, Lady Bentham remarks, little immediate change was apparent, beyond the turning on the wall of a sign board, on one face of which was written "Rue de la République," on the other "Rue Royale."

After the
Hundred
Days.
1815, æt. 58.
Loss of son.

But soon afterwards, part of the imperial troops were sent to Tours: they were discontented, and they exhibited signs of mutiny and violence. The Benthams prudently left for Paris, which was in possession of the allies: and where Sir Samuel was among his early friends, both French and Russian; besides the Abbots now become Lord and Lady Colchester. Calling on the Duc de Richlieu, whom he had not seen for twenty years, he refused to send in his name, but was soon recognized. Sir Samuel said of him, that he was the only Frenchman of his acquaintance, whose sobriety of thought and conduct carried him to years of discretion before thirty.

* The present Emperor has often applied this word to his uncle.

Soon after this, Sir Samuel suffered the irreparable loss of a son; a promising youth of sixteen, who was struck by a disorder which proved fatal, though he lingered till March of the following year. For a time he resided at Arcueil, in a part of the château of M. Berthollet; where he enjoyed the society of the great chemist's friends; and among them, Voltaire's "*belle et bonne*,"* tall, thin, active, and with the manners of the old régime. For the sake of his health he travelled south; and furnished with special introductions from the Duc de Richelieu to the Prefects of many Departments, he visited Amboise where he saw the Comte Chaptal's manufactory of beet-root sugar, and passed on to Angoulême.

From this time for a dozen years, the Navy Board lived at peace; free from the impertinent strictures of an over zealous reformer. Unfortunately, this gain to a knot of respectable gentlemen, was a vast loss to the country. Millions might have been saved, and the efficiency of the peace establishment might have been greatly augmented, under the supervision of a man of such great experience and such unflagging energy; with a zeal chastened by years, and the volatility of youth tempered by long opposition. Till 1827, Sir Samuel remained on the Continent. He then returned to England, with the intention of publishing some essays he was writing, and some documents selected from his official papers. A considerable number of his publications will be found in the library of the London Statistical Society.

1815 to 1827.
æet. 58 to 70.

* I confess I do not know whether this was Madame de Châtelet.

The latest of them which I have seen mentioned is *Financial Reform Scrutinized*, published in 1830.

1827-31,
æet. 70 to 74.
Last services
to Admiralty.

During the remainder of his life, neither his mind nor his pen was idle; and both were placed at the disposal of the naval administration, without recompense either offered or expected. After his return to England in 1827, he addressed a letter to Mr. Croker, on the subject of the Transport Service; showing how £20,000 a year might be saved by using vessels of war in that service, during times of peace. He urged also that great savings might be effected, if the Government would manufacture more of its own stores;* an opinion by no means consonant with that of political economists; who generally maintain that however wise it may be for a government to secure a supply of ships, arms, and ammunition, by making them, yet that in most other cases it is more economical to buy by contract.

During his long leisure he had thought much on the principles of ship building, a topic familiar to him from boyhood. I have mentioned before, that in 1795 he had built seven small vessels for the British Government, entirely after his own plans; and that as Lady Bentham tells us, the efficiency of these vessels and their durability, had justified the form and the materials adopted. He had the satisfaction of seeing the best steamboats constructed of the same form in many parts. But much remained to be done. He saw that the costliness of making experiments on ships, each as large as a barrack, was a bar to rapid improvements: he therefore invented

* "Financial Reform" in a "Letter to Sir H. Parnell," 1830. Pa. 50.

an apparatus by which changes of form might be tried; and he advised that any new form which seemed favourable, should be first applied to small craft, and afterwards to larger vessels. His long absence on the Continent had so lessened the prejudices against him, that the Navy Board, which was not yet abolished, willingly listened to his suggestions.

There now seemed a prospect of Sir Samuel's once more turning to good account, the inventive genius matured by a long life. The Whigs, after a generation of exclusion from office, were in power. The Reform Bill had been introduced, though not yet carried. The excitement throughout the country led men to expect changes for the better in every department: the old Tory apathy was to be superseded by activity and intelligence: this was the time for improving the civil service of the Navy. At first however, there were difficulties in the way. The Admiralty was known to be favourable to him: Sir James Graham was a man of firmness and zeal: but on application to the Comptroller, reference was made to superior authority; and a committee was nominated. But Sir Samuel, true to his principle of individual responsibility, hesitated to act with even three gentlemen, any one of whom separately he would willingly have trusted. He therefore privately induced Maudesley to make some models of the projected apparatus. Unhappily, both Mr. Maudesley and Sir Samuel were old men; and before anything important could be done, both were lost. On the 31st May, 1831, the great naval reformer died at the age of 74.

1831, æt. 74.
Death.

Was Gen. B.
a "rolling-
stone"?

In reviewing the whole career of General Bentham, it is natural to ask the question; how did he escape the ill fortune proverbially assigned to rolling stones? Son of an eminent solicitor, brother of an Oxford graduate and barrister, he insisted on becoming apprentice to a ship-builder. When an adept in his business, he went off to the Continent, just as a young German journeyman makes the circuit of his own country. Speaking French fluently, endowed with a handsome person and popular manners, making friends in every place, he narrowly missed through conscientious scruples, a Russian heiress and the permanent patronage of the Czarina. Departing to the Crimea with Prince Potemkin, after equipping a flotilla against the Turks, he found himself commanding a vessel of war, and exposed to all the dangers of hard-fought battle. Rewarded with rank and title, he refused to continue a sailor: failing in his superintendence of Potemkin's improvements and factories, he got a military command in Siberia; and as an officer there employed himself in exploring the country, and promoting Russian commerce. To carry out his inventions for working in wood, and to gratify a longing after home, he returned to England on leave of absence: and finding himself well received and highly appreciated by Earl Spencer and the Admiralty, after applying his patrimony to experiments, he abandoned his flattering Russian career, and entered the British service. Even here his course was eccentric. First, he was empowered to build vessels after models and on principles of his own: then an office, at a high salary, was

created expressly for him; and he applied with singular alacrity and equal ability the critical and censorial powers intrusted to him. The impatience and anger of his victims at length prevailed; and he was sent on a fool's errand to Archangel, to build ships for England. Alexander having ultimately refused his consent to the scheme, General Bentham returned to England, and found his office abolished. After a few years more, his second office was abolished. By a painful struggle and with the help of influential friends, he got his claims on the government settled, and retired to the Continent to educate his family. As an old man he returned to England, and was just entering on an investigation of great importance to our naval service, when he died.

If we compare this career with that of most government officers, we must confess it to have been an erratic one. Yet I must pronounce it successful: for General Bentham did much for the service of his country: by introducing steam machinery into the dockyards; by his patronage of Brunel; by various plans of mechanical improvement; by working with Abbot to reform the financial arrangements: generally, by applying high intellectual powers and much experience, backed by disinterested zeal, to the improvement of the civil department of the navy, under the sanction during many years, of Earl Spencer and other earnest administrative reformers. Nor were personal rewards wanting. Early in life, he got Russian rank and title: a little later he held high office with a liberal salary in England: and if his enemies afterwards prevailed, they never

Was
certainly
successful.

robbed him of the respect of his friends, or even of his well-earned remuneration. Regarded as a reformer, in days of Tory dislike to reform, he was singularly fortunate.

Rolling stones
generally.

After all, the popular saying as to rolling stones, is, like other proverbs, true only within limits. There are, no doubt, men of so volatile a character, that they are in danger of continuing to be children all their days: but there are also men of so sluggish a character, that they are incapable of effort towards anything great. Even as regards pecuniary success, enterprise is as needful as prudence: the French Canadians, bound by sloth and sentiment to the soil, are slipping down that easy descent which formerly lodged the Irish in the slough of despond; while the rough and resolute Western settlers multiply their numbers, without damage to their condition. Even in England you may find many a family of which the brothers set out to seek their fortunes in either hemisphere, and return home to pass their later years, rich and respected: while their neighbours, though industrious and prudent, laboured with little fruit, because they could not desert the occupations to which they were bred, though these had ceased to be profitable.

Sir S. B's
method.

The most timid people too, though they may regard General Bentham's course as a mad one, must confess that there was a method in it. He began as a boy with an irresistible desire of becoming a great naval architect: having a wise father, he was permitted to follow his bent: while working earnestly at his trade, he strove to acquire the higher kinds of information: by his father's

prudence he gained a familiarity with the French language: under the advice of the best judges he went abroad to learn what foreigners were doing: during his protracted stay on the Continent he invented a new method of working in wood, which was then the sole material of vessels: returning to England at last, he found an opening in the British service, and cheerfully abandoned his excellent prospects in Russia: from this time he devoted himself heart and soul to the career towards which his boyish wishes had aspired. As a child he had resolved to become a great British naval architect: as a mature man he fulfilled his resolutions. Eccentric as his course must have seemed to the formal officials of the Navy Board, it is probable that not one of themselves had so shaped out a plan and followed it, as had General Bentham.

Many aberrations no doubt, there were. He went abroad to look about him; his popularity at St. Petersburg detained him there, and he was on the point of becoming by marriage a Russian noble: migrating to the Crimea, he gave himself up to the affairs of Potemkin, and served a short volunteer apprenticeship to the trade of fighting: and when he found himself disgusted with his want of success in the one department, and disinclined to the other, he failed to return to England as undeviating constancy would have required, and he requested a military command, which was granted him. When he did return home, it was not with the intention of asking for employment; but partly from a desire to visit his native country, partly to carry out his mechanical inventions.

Aberrations.

These inevitable.

However, when we compare his course with that of other high spirited enterprising men, we shall find that such deviations are almost inevitable. A man must be principally the creature of circumstances: the most he can do is to be ready, like a good pilot, to steer his vessel aright. If he has enterprise enough to take him out of the beaten track, he cannot foresee whither his fortune may lead him; and he must be pronounced constant to his aspirations, if he is found at last, even after many short wanderings, pursuing the career on which he originally entered. Such was the case with General Bentham: as a boy he resolved to be a great British naval architect; as a mature man he was a great British naval architect.

Singular accomplishment of wishes.

Indeed he seems to me a remarkable instance of the realization of boyish wishes: since it was only by a fortuitous combination of favourable events that his schemes were carried out. If Bentham's father had, like most parents, repressed his son's ardour as a whimsical ebullition of boyhood; if the mother of the Russian heiress had been less obdurate; if Bentham had succeeded in the management of Potemkin's estates; if on his visit to England he had found at the head of the Admiralty such a man as the second Lord Melville, instead of such a man as Earl Spencer, or Earl St. Vincent; if the Navy Board had had the ear of the Admiralty during the years of his administration; Bentham would have failed in his career: he would probably have become a distinguished Russian subject; he could not have become a great naval constructor at home.

The qualities of Bentham as an official man were very unusual. He had singular ingenuity in construction: his power of ready adaptation of means was shown in his heavy armed flotilla with which he repulsed the Turks: his reasoning faculty was exhibited in the elaborate investigations by which he tested the value of dockyard improvements. A man however, might have these faculties, without the moral qualities needful to render them available. Bentham had an honest ambition to earn distinction by real service: he was disinterested: he was generous to his fellow officers: he was considerate towards his workmen. Hated he was of course; by the members of the Navy Board, whose apathetic routine he disturbed; by the employés, whose "chips," or rather whose building timber, he cut off; by the officials at the Admiralty whose accounts he helped Abbot to investigate; by the contractors, whose peculations he stopped; by the surveyors, whose bribes he intercepted; by the naval architects, whose futilities he exposed.

B's official
qualities.

He actually did great things. One distasteful service he had to perform: the enumeration of his own good deeds, as the justification of his claim for a pension. He did not claim compensation on the ordinary ground of having been bred to the service, and having long performed his stipulated duties. He mentioned in his schedule nothing in the regular line of his duty: * "I have confined myself to such services as originated in myself, and being of a kind for the *non-rendering* of which no *blame* could have

Things
accomplished

* Biography, 299.

attached to me." This memorial was carefully read by Abbot; a man so chary of the expression of feeling, that on the horrible event of Perceval's assassination, almost within view of his Speaker's chair, the entry in his Diary was merely, "This day Perceval was shot." Yet under his friend Bentham's memorial he wrote, "A noble monument of Sagacity, Industry, and Perseverance."

THE END.

